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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON *VISHAMASHAN AND RATRI JAGARAN* – A SILENT KILLER IN NOW-A- DAYS

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Abstract

In today's fast-paced world, lifestyle-induced health issues are on the rise, with *Vishamashan* (erratic eating habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (night-time wakefulness) emerging as significant but often overlooked risk factors. Rooted in the ancient wisdom of *Ayurveda*, these behaviors are considered *Prajnaparadha* (crimes against wisdom), as they disturb the balance of the body's *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—leading to various chronic disorders. This article explores the physiological and psychological impacts of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran*, linking them to an increased prevalence of digestive disorders, metabolic syndrome, mental health issues, and immune dysregulation. Practical Ayurvedic guidelines are provided to help mitigate these impacts and support holistic health. Recognizing these behaviors as silent but profound disruptors of well-being underscores the relevance of Ayurvedic lifestyle principles in addressing modern health challenges.

Keywords: *Vishamashan, Ratri Jagaran, Ayurveda*, lifestyle disorders, Dosha imbalance, *Agni, Ojas*, Silent Killer.

Introduction

Modern lifestyles, characterized by fast-paced schedules and high levels of stress, have led to the rise of numerous lifestyle-related health issues. Among these, two particularly insidious practices—*Vishamashan* (irregular eating habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (night-time wakefulness)—have become increasingly prevalent, silently impacting physical, mental, and emotional well-being.¹ Rooted in the Ayurvedic concept of *Prajnaparadha* (crimes against wisdom), these behaviors are seen as violations of the body's natural rhythms and cycles. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of holistic medicine, regards health as a dynamic balance between the *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. Practices like *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* disrupt this balance, leading to the accumulation of *Ama* (toxins) and the depletion of *Ojas* (vitality), making individuals more susceptible to disease.²

In recent years, irregular eating habits have become common as individuals skip meals, overeat, or consume processed foods due to time constraints and convenience. *Vishamashan*—the Ayurvedic term for such erratic eating—directly impacts *Agni* (digestive fire), a critical determinant of health and metabolism in Ayurveda.³ When *Agni* is disturbed, it leads to the formation of *Ama*, which can impair digestion and contribute to conditions like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.⁴

Likewise, *Ratri Jagaran*, or staying awake late at night, disrupts the body's natural sleep cycle. According to Ayurveda, the body's daily rhythms are synchronized with the cycles of nature, governed by *Dinacharya* (daily regimen). Nighttime wakefulness not only affects mental clarity and emotional stability but also weakens *Ojas*, compromising immunity and vitality. Over time, it can lead to chronic issues such as sleep disorders, anxiety, cognitive impairment, and even metabolic disruptions.⁵

Together, *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* represent a hidden but substantial threat to modern health. While these behaviors are rarely given the attention they deserve, their cumulative impact can lead to long-term health consequences, making them silent killers today. By understanding and correcting these lifestyle imbalances, individuals can enhance their health and well-being in alignment with the principles of Ayurveda.⁶

Aim and Objective:

To explore the adverse health impacts of *Vishamashan* (erratic eating habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (night-time wakefulness) in modern lifestyles and Ayurvedic insights.

Objectives:

1. To analyze the concept of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* in Ayurveda.
2. To examine the physiological, metabolic, and psychological impacts of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* on the body's *Doshas*, *Agni*, and *Ojas*.

3. To assess the effects of *Ratri Jagaran* on mental clarity, emotional stability, immunity, and its potential to contribute to sleep disorders, anxiety, and metabolic imbalances.

Materials and Methods

Materials

1. **Literature Review:** Relevant classical Ayurvedic texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Astanga Hridaya*, were used to extract fundamental concepts of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran*, their impacts, and Ayurvedic guidelines for management. Additionally, contemporary research articles on lifestyle disorders, metabolic health, and circadian rhythms were reviewed to establish a scientific basis for Ayurvedic principles.
2. **Data Sources:** Information was collected from Ayurvedic classical texts, recent studies in Ayurveda journals, and publications on circadian health, dietary patterns, and the impact of sleep deprivation. Data on sleep-related issues, were drawn from health databases and research studies.
3. **Tools and Techniques:** The Ayurvedic concepts were analyzed with tools such as *Nidana Panchaka* (fivefold method for disease diagnosis) and *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) to understand how *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* disrupt *Dosha* balance, *Agni*, and *Ojas*. Techniques from Ayurvedic pharmacology, such as *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* (principles of dietetics), were employed to suggest practical dietary modifications.

Methods

1. **Literature Analysis and Thematic Synthesis:** The study involved a qualitative synthesis of Ayurvedic and contemporary texts to categorize the impact of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* on the body and mind. Ayurvedic diagnostic frameworks such as *Tridosha Siddhanta* (theory of three humors) and *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) were applied to identify the physiological disruptions caused by irregular eating and night-time wakefulness.
2. **Data Extraction and Compilation:** Information on the pathophysiology, symptoms, and long-term impacts of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* was compiled, with emphasis on how they contribute to lifestyle diseases.

Concept of *Vishamashan*

In *Ayurveda*, *Vishamashan* refers to irregular, incompatible, or erratic eating habits that disturb the body's natural digestive processes and lead to various health disorders. The term is derived from "Vishama" (uneven or irregular) and "Ashana" (eating), symbolizing dietary habits that defy the natural rhythm and order needed for proper digestion and assimilation.⁷

Vishamashan is recognized as a key factor in lifestyle disorders and is considered a form of *Prajnaparadha* (a violation of wisdom) due to its detrimental effects on *Agni* (digestive fire), *Doshas* (body humors), and the formation of *Ama* (toxins).⁸

Causes of Vishamashan

Vishamashan can result from various lifestyle, psychological, and social factors, such as:

1. **Busy Schedules:** Fast-paced lifestyles and professional commitments often lead individuals to skip meals, eat at irregular times, or consume convenient but unhealthy food options.⁹
2. **Lack of Awareness:** Many people are unaware of the impact of diet on health and may engage in habits like overeating or combining incompatible foods.¹⁰
3. **Stress and Emotional Eating:** Emotional stress, anxiety, and psychological imbalances can drive people to eat in an uncontrolled manner, consuming excessive or comfort foods without regard to timing or quality.¹¹
4. **Social Influence:** Dining out frequently, social gatherings, and exposure to processed or fast foods contribute to unhealthy eating patterns, often beyond one's control.¹²

Types of Vishamashan

Based on Ayurvedic principles, *Vishamashan* manifests in different forms, each with unique impacts on *Dosha* balance and *Agni*:

1. **Asamyak Bhojana (Improper Eating):**
 - **Adhyashana (Overeating):** Eating before the previous meal is digested, leading to the mixing of undigested food with the new intake. This weakens *Agni* and leads to *Ama* formation.¹³
 - **Atimatra Bhojana (Excessive Eating):** Consuming food in excess strains *Agni* and disrupts the natural balance of *Doshas*, causing disorders like obesity, indigestion, and *Ama* accumulation.¹⁴
 - **Alpa Bhojana (Undereating):** Eating insufficient quantities deprives the body of essential nutrients and weakens *Agni*, which can result in weakness, fatigue, and malnutrition.¹⁵
2. **Viruddhahara (Incompatible Food Combinations):**
 - Certain foods, when consumed together, create imbalances due to their opposing qualities, *Guna* (properties), or *Virya* (potency). Examples include milk with fish or sour fruits, which create metabolic disturbances and generate *Ama*, causing skin issues, digestive problems, and metabolic disorders.¹⁶
3. **Ajirna Bhojana (Eating During Indigestion):**

- Eating when the previous meal is not fully digested burdens *Agni*, as it is unable to process new food effectively. This weakens digestion over time and contributes to *Ama* formation.¹⁷

4. Irregular Meal Timing:

- Eating at inconsistent times disrupts the body's natural circadian rhythm, which is essential for optimal digestion. According to Ayurveda, *Agni* has specific times when it is strongest, aligning with *Pitta Dosha* activity, particularly at noon. Consuming meals outside these times weakens *Agni* and impacts metabolic balance.¹⁸

5. Unwholesome Food Choices (Junk Food Consumption):

- Ayurveda emphasizes fresh, wholesome foods that support *Agni*. Consumption of heavily processed, artificial, or overly spicy and fried foods burdens digestion and creates imbalances, leading to conditions such as acidity, gastritis, and *Ama* accumulation.¹⁹

Impact of *Vishamashan* on Health

Vishamashan disrupts the natural harmony of *Agni* and *Doshas*, leading to a cascade of physiological and metabolic disorders. Some of the significant health impacts include:

1. Agni Imbalance and Ama Formation:

- Improper eating habits disturb *Agni*, reducing its ability to break down food effectively. As a result, partially digested food material accumulates in the body as *Ama*, which clogs the *Srotas* (channels) and interferes with nutrient absorption and waste elimination.²⁰

2. Dosha Imbalance:

- *Vishamashan* disrupts the equilibrium of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*.²¹
 - **Vata** is aggravated by irregular and erratic eating, leading to bloating, constipation, and anxiety.²²
 - **Pitta** is disturbed by excessive, spicy, or incompatible foods, causing acidity, heartburn, and inflammatory conditions.²³
 - **Kapha** is aggravated by overeating and consuming heavy, oily foods, resulting in lethargy, obesity, and congestion.²⁴

3. Digestive Disorders:

- Common digestive issues such as acid reflux, gastritis, constipation, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) are directly linked to *Vishamashan*, as the constant strain on digestion weakens *Agni* over time.²⁵

4. Metabolic Disorders:

- Erratic eating patterns and *Ama* accumulation increase the risk of lifestyle disorders like diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases. *Ama* interferes with metabolic pathways, leading to obesity, high cholesterol, and insulin resistance.²⁶

5. Mental and Emotional Health:

- *Vishamashan* not only affects the body but also impacts mental health. Erratic eating destabilizes *Sattva* (mental clarity and balance) and aggravates *Rajas* (activity, passion) and *Tamas* (inertia), contributing to anxiety, mood swings, and poor concentration.²⁷

6. Immune Weakness:

- *Ama* accumulation and weakened *Agni* diminish *Ojas*, the essence of immunity and vitality in Ayurveda. Over time, this leads to frequent infections, fatigue, and reduced resilience to diseases.²⁸

Ayurvedic Perspective on Preventing Vishamashan

According to *Ayurveda*, maintaining a balanced *Agni* through regulated eating habits is essential for health. Here are some Ayurvedic guidelines to avoid *Vishamashan* and support optimal digestion:

1. **Follow Regular Mealtimes:** Ayurveda recommends eating at the same times each day to strengthen *Agni* and support digestive rhythm, particularly taking the main meal at noon when *Pitta* is dominant, supporting strong digestion.²⁹
2. **Eat Mindfully and Avoid Distractions:** Focusing on the food, without distractions such as television or mobile phones, ensures that the mind and body are fully involved in the digestive process, enhancing *Agni*.³⁰
3. **Avoid Incompatible Food Combinations (*Viruddhahara*):** Combining foods according to their properties, such as avoiding mixing milk with sour fruits, reduces digestive burden and prevents *Ama* accumulation.³¹
4. **Consume Fresh, Seasonal Foods:** Eating freshly prepared, seasonal foods in appropriate quantities, with balanced tastes and qualities (*Rasa* and *Guna*), supports *Agni* and maintains *Dosha* harmony.³²

5. **Practice Moderate Portions and Avoid Overeating:** Ayurveda advocates for eating until one feels 75% full to allow space for digestion and prevent *Agni* from becoming overwhelmed.³³
6. **Use Digestive Herbs and Spices:** Incorporating herbs and spices like ginger, cumin, fennel, and turmeric enhances *Agni*, prevents *Ama*, and supports digestion, especially when consuming heavy or difficult-to-digest foods.³⁴

Concept of Ratri Jagaran

In *Ayurveda*, *Ratri Jagaran* refers to the practice of staying awake late at night, deviating from the natural sleep cycle. The term combines "Ratri" (night) and "Jagaran" (wakefulness) and signifies wakefulness during the time when the body and mind are naturally inclined toward rest. This irregular sleep habit is particularly relevant in modern lifestyles, where people often stay up late due to work, social engagements, or excessive screen exposure.³⁵ Ayurveda categorizes *Ratri Jagaran* as *Prajnaparadha* (a violation of wisdom), as it disrupts the balance of *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—and compromises *Ojas*, the essence of immunity and vitality.³⁶

Causes of Ratri Jagaran

Ratri Jagaran can be triggered by various lifestyle and environmental factors, including:

1. **Technological Distractions:** The increased use of smartphones, computers, and television keeps people awake, exposing them to blue light, which suppresses melatonin (the sleep hormone) and delays sleep onset.³⁷
2. **Work and Social Commitments:** Professional demands, shift work, and late-night social engagements can extend wakefulness into late hours, disturbing the natural sleep cycle.³⁸
3. **Stress and Anxiety:** Mental stress, worry, and anxiety prevent restful sleep, leading to prolonged wakefulness and disturbed sleep patterns.³⁹
4. **Lifestyle Choices:** Excessive caffeine intake, unhealthy eating habits, and lack of a consistent sleep routine contribute to late-night wakefulness.⁴⁰

Ayurvedic Understanding of the Sleep Cycle

According to Ayurveda, the body follows a natural circadian rhythm, where each period of the day and night is governed by specific *Doshas*:

1. **Kapha Dosha (6 pm – 10 pm):** The evening period is dominated by *Kapha Dosha*, which promotes a sense of calmness and heaviness. Ayurveda recommends falling asleep during this period as the *Kapha* qualities help the body enter a restful sleep naturally.⁴¹

2. **Pitta Dosha (10 pm – 2 am):** The night period from 10 pm to 2 am is governed by *Pitta*, the transformative energy that supports digestion, detoxification, and tissue repair. This phase is crucial for metabolic activities and should ideally occur during sleep, allowing the body to renew and cleanse itself.⁴²
3. **Vata Dosha (2 am – 6 am):** The early morning period is influenced by *Vata*, promoting alertness and a light, active mind. Waking up before dawn aligns with *Vata's* qualities and supports mental clarity, creativity, and vitality throughout the day.⁴³

When one stays awake during *Kapha* and *Pitta* hours, this rhythm is disturbed, causing physiological, mental, and emotional imbalances.

Types of Ratri Jagaran

Based on the severity and pattern of wakefulness, *Ratri Jagaran* manifests in different ways, each with unique impacts on *Dosha* balance and health:

1. **Occasional Ratri Jagaran:** Staying awake late at night sporadically (e.g., once a week) due to social or work-related engagements. While this may not cause immediate issues, frequent occurrences weaken *Ojas* over time, impacting immunity and vitality.⁴⁴
2. **Chronic Ratri Jagaran:** Regularly staying awake late, resulting in a disturbed sleep pattern that affects *Dosha* balance, *Agni*, and overall health. This can lead to significant *Vata* and *Pitta* imbalances, resulting in long-term health issues.⁴⁵
3. **Insomnia-Induced Ratri Jagaran:** Inability to fall asleep even when one wants to due to factors such as stress, anxiety, or physical discomfort. This type of *Ratri Jagaran* aggravates *Vata*, leading to mental disturbances, fatigue, and weakened immunity.⁴⁶

Impact of Ratri Jagaran on Health

The Ayurvedic perspective emphasizes the importance of aligning with natural rhythms for optimal health. *Ratri Jagaran* disrupts these rhythms, leading to a range of physiological, mental, and metabolic issues.

1. Vata and Pitta Imbalance:

- Staying awake late aggravates *Vata* due to the prolonged wakefulness and restlessness associated with late hours, leading to anxiety, nervousness, and mental fatigue.⁴⁷
- *Pitta* imbalance occurs due to interference in the natural detoxification processes, resulting in acidity, inflammation, and digestive issues. The liver's peak detoxification process, which takes place during *Pitta* time, is hampered, causing toxin accumulation.⁴⁸

2. Reduced Ojas and Immunity:

- Sleep is essential for replenishing *Ojas*, the essence that nourishes and strengthens the immune system. Chronic *Ratri Jagaran* depletes *Ojas*, resulting in a weakened immune system, increased susceptibility to infections, fatigue, and a general lack of vitality.⁴⁹

3. Digestive Disorders:

- Staying awake disrupts the digestive cycle, especially if food is consumed late at night. The body's ability to process and assimilate nutrients is impaired, leading to conditions like acidity, indigestion, and *Ama* formation, which further clogs bodily channels (*Srotas*).⁵⁰

4. Mental and Emotional Health:

- *Ratri Jagaran* aggravates *Vata*, affecting mental clarity and stability. This manifests as heightened stress, anxiety, irritability, and reduced cognitive function. Chronic sleep deprivation is also linked to mood disorders, depression, and memory problems.⁵¹

5. Metabolic and Hormonal Imbalance:

- The disruption of circadian rhythms affects the release of hormones, such as cortisol and melatonin, essential for regulating sleep, appetite, and stress responses. Irregular sleep increases cortisol levels, which affects glucose metabolism, increases fat storage, and can lead to metabolic disorders like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.⁵²

6. Aging and Cellular Repair:

- Nighttime is crucial for cellular repair and rejuvenation, processes governed by *Pitta*. By staying awake, the body's ability to regenerate and heal itself is compromised, accelerating the aging process and increasing the likelihood of degenerative diseases.⁵³

Ayurvedic Guidelines to Counteract Ratri Jagaran

Ayurveda offers various guidelines to prevent or mitigate the effects of *Ratri Jagaran* and restore *Dosha* balance, promoting restful sleep and overall wellness:

1. **Adopt a Regular Sleep Schedule:** Going to bed and waking up at the same time daily, ideally by 10 pm and rising before dawn, aligns with natural *Dosha* rhythms, supporting better sleep quality and balanced energy throughout the day.⁵⁴

2. **Follow Evening Wind-Down Routines:** Establishing calming rituals before bed, such as gentle stretching, reading, or meditation, helps settle *Vata* and prepares the mind and body for rest.⁵⁵
3. **Practice Digital Detox Before Bedtime:** Reducing exposure to blue light from screens at least an hour before bed enhances melatonin production, making it easier to fall asleep naturally.⁵⁶
4. **Consume Light Evening Meals:** Eating a light, easily digestible dinner early in the evening prevents *Ama* formation and reduces the digestive load, supporting restful sleep. Avoid stimulants such as caffeine and heavy, spicy, or fried foods close to bedtime.⁵⁷
5. **Embrace Dinacharya (Daily Routine):** Following a consistent daily regimen that includes early rising, exercise, balanced meals, and timely sleep creates a stable foundation for health, reducing the likelihood of *Ratri Jagaran* and its effects.⁵⁸

Discussion

In the modern age, *Vishamashan* (irregular eating habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (night-time wakefulness) are increasingly prevalent, driven by lifestyle demands, social trends, and technological distractions. This study highlights how these behaviors, though often overlooked, act as silent disruptors of health, creating imbalances that lead to chronic diseases over time. From an Ayurvedic perspective, both *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* are forms of *Prajnaparadha* (crimes against wisdom), knowingly violating the body's natural needs and rhythms, leading to disturbances in *Dosha* balance, *Agni*, and *Ojas*. This discussion explores the multifaceted impact of these habits on health and the relevance of Ayurvedic principles in addressing these modern-day health challenges.⁵⁹

The Role of Dosha Imbalance in Lifestyle Disorders

The Ayurvedic framework identifies the three *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—as fundamental to maintaining health. *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* disturb these *Doshas* in unique ways, creating a cascade of health issues:

1. **Impact on Vata and Mental Health:** Both *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* predominantly aggravate *Vata Dosha*, which governs movement, circulation, and the nervous system. *Vishamashan*, with its erratic eating patterns, leads to digestive instability, while *Ratri Jagaran* affects mental calmness and cognitive function. Elevated *Vata* contributes to anxiety, restlessness, and mental fatigue, which are common symptoms in those with chronic irregular routines. Studies linking sleep deprivation to increased stress hormones support Ayurveda's assertion that *Ratri Jagaran* creates mental and emotional imbalances.⁶⁰

2. **Pitta Aggravation and Digestive Disorders:** *Pitta*, responsible for metabolism and transformation in the body, is particularly affected by late-night wakefulness. The peak detoxification period governed by *Pitta* occurs between 10 pm and 2 am, when the body processes waste and supports cellular repair. Staying awake during these hours disrupts this natural process, leading to conditions like acidity, liver issues, and inflammation. Additionally, *Vishamashan* with incompatible food combinations (*Viruddhahara*) and erratic meal timing can further aggravate *Pitta*, manifesting as acid reflux, gastritis, and other metabolic imbalances.⁶¹
3. **Kapha Imbalance and Metabolic Slowdown:** *Kapha*, which provides structure and stability to the body, is also impacted by these irregular habits. *Vishamashan* in the form of overeating or consuming heavy, oily foods aggravates *Kapha*, leading to lethargy, weight gain, and metabolic slowdown. Late-night eating coupled with *Ratri Jagaran* prevents the body from entering a state of rest and rejuvenation, weakening digestion and promoting obesity and insulin resistance over time. Research linking circadian disruptions with metabolic syndrome validates the Ayurvedic perspective on *Kapha* disturbances due to lifestyle irregularities.⁶³

Physiological Consequences of Agni Disruption and Ama Formation

Central to Ayurvedic health is *Agni* (digestive fire), responsible for proper digestion, absorption, and assimilation of nutrients. When *Vishamashan* disrupts regular eating patterns, it weakens *Agni*, reducing its ability to digest food completely, leading to *Ama* (toxic by-products). *Ama* accumulates in tissues, blocking *Srotas* (bodily channels) and impairing the function of bodily systems. Digestive issues like bloating, constipation, and malabsorption are among the primary consequences of *Ama* accumulation, which also contributes to systemic diseases when left unchecked.⁶⁴

Similarly, *Ratri Jagaran* prevents the body from fully utilizing *Agni* for nighttime detoxification, hindering the elimination of metabolic wastes. Over time, this leads to the formation of *Ama*, further weakening immunity and contributing to a range of lifestyle disorders, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and obesity. Modern research on the role of gut health and detoxification during sleep aligns with Ayurvedic principles, illustrating the importance of maintaining strong *Agni* through regulated eating and sleep patterns.⁶⁵

Ojas Depletion and Immune Weakness

Ojas, the essence that provides vitality and immunity, is depleted by chronic *Ratri Jagaran* and *Vishamashan*. Both habits lead to the formation of *Ama*, reducing the body's ability to nourish and protect itself. Sleep deprivation, as seen with *Ratri Jagaran*, weakens *Ojas*, compromising immunity and vitality. Individuals with depleted *Ojas* often experience fatigue, low energy, and an increased susceptibility to infections and illness. Ayurveda underscores

the importance of restful sleep and proper diet in building *Ojas*, promoting resilience and long-term health.⁶⁶

Practicality of Ayurvedic Guidelines for Modern Lifestyles

Ayurveda's lifestyle recommendations, including *Dinacharya* (daily routine) and specific dietary guidelines, offer practical tools to counteract the effects of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran*. For instance, regular meal timing aligns with circadian rhythms, strengthening *Agni* and reducing *Ama* accumulation. Additionally, an early bedtime and wind-down practices like *Abhyanga* (oil massage) or meditation help balance *Vata*, reduce mental agitation, and promote restful sleep.⁶⁷

Incorporating Ayurvedic herbs such as *Ashwagandha* and *Brahmi*, known for their adaptogenic and calming properties, can help manage stress and improve sleep quality. Herbal teas and spices like ginger and turmeric also aid in supporting digestion and enhancing *Agni*. Modern research supports the benefits of these interventions, particularly in managing stress, improving sleep quality, and enhancing immunity.⁶⁸

The Relevance of Ayurveda in Addressing Lifestyle Disorders

The growing prevalence of lifestyle disorders, such as diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular diseases, highlights the need for preventive approaches that go beyond symptomatic treatment. Ayurveda's holistic perspective, which considers lifestyle and diet as foundational to health, is particularly relevant in addressing these issues. By identifying *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* as significant lifestyle disruptors, Ayurveda provides insights into the root causes of these disorders and offers practical solutions to mitigate their effects. Embracing Ayurvedic principles can help individuals foster a balanced lifestyle, promoting long-term wellness and resilience.⁶⁹

Role of *Vishamashan* (Irregular Eating Habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (Night-Time Wakefulness) as a Silent Killer

In today's fast-paced world, *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* have become common practices, often seen as minor lifestyle choices rather than serious health risks. However, Ayurveda identifies these behaviors as *Prajnaparadha* (crimes against wisdom), viewing them as fundamental disruptors of the body's natural harmony and contributors to chronic disease. Although their impact may not be immediately apparent, the cumulative effects of irregular eating and sleep patterns gradually undermine health, earning them the label of "silent killers." Here's an in-depth look at how these habits act as silent threats to well-being.⁷⁰

1. *Vishamashan* and Digestive Health as the Root of Disease

Ayurveda emphasizes that health begins with proper digestion, governed by *Agni* (digestive fire). *Vishamashan*, characterized by erratic meal timings, overeating, under-eating, and incompatible food combinations (*Viruddhahara*), disrupts *Agni*, leading to weakened

digestion and the formation of *Ama* (toxins). As *Ama* accumulates, it clogs the *Srotas* (channels) and impairs nutrient absorption, contributing to metabolic and immune disorders. The gradual buildup of *Ama* silently weakens the body, manifesting as fatigue, bloating, indigestion, and, over time, conditions like diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and even autoimmune disorders.

The silent but cumulative effects of *Vishamashan* demonstrate its role in weakening the foundation of health, making the body more susceptible to chronic diseases. Research linking erratic eating patterns to obesity, metabolic syndrome, and digestive disorders further supports the Ayurvedic understanding of *Vishamashan* as a key factor in lifestyle diseases.⁷¹

2. Ratri Jagaran and Circadian Rhythm Disruption

Ratri Jagaran, or staying awake at night, disrupts the body's circadian rhythm, essential for maintaining hormonal balance, digestion, and immunity. According to Ayurveda, nighttime is governed by *Kapha* (6–10 pm) and *Pitta* (10 pm–2 am), cycles crucial for rest, rejuvenation, and detoxification. Staying awake during these hours not only impairs sleep quality but also prevents the body from undergoing vital processes such as liver detoxification, cellular repair, and memory consolidation.

When the body is deprived of restorative sleep, it experiences heightened stress, aggravated *Vata*, and weakened *Ojas*, leading to fatigue, anxiety, poor concentration, and decreased immunity. Chronic *Ratri Jagaran* raises cortisol levels, affects blood sugar regulation, and increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases. The effects accumulate slowly, and over time, individuals experience conditions like hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and mood disorders—clear evidence of its role as a silent health threat.⁷²

3. Mental and Emotional Health

The influence of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* extends beyond physical health, significantly impacting mental and emotional well-being. Irregular eating habits and inadequate sleep disrupt *Vata* and *Pitta* Doshas, leading to heightened stress, irritability, mood swings, and impaired cognitive function. Chronic sleep deprivation and erratic eating patterns contribute to increased levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol, which weakens the immune system and accelerates aging. Furthermore, these imbalances impact *Sattva* (mental clarity and stability), promoting *Rajas* (activity, restlessness) and *Tamas* (inertia, dullness), which in turn can lead to anxiety, depression, and mental fatigue.⁷³

4. **Metabolic and Hormonal Disorders** The cumulative effects of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* result in metabolic disturbances and hormonal imbalances. Erratic eating patterns spike insulin levels, leading to insulin resistance and an increased risk of diabetes and obesity. Similarly, night-time wakefulness disrupts the release of key hormones, such as cortisol and melatonin, vital for metabolism, stress management, and sleep regulation. Over

time, these disturbances lead to metabolic syndrome, characterized by a cluster of conditions—high blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat, and abnormal cholesterol levels—all of which increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.⁷⁴

5. **Weakened Immunity and Increased Susceptibility to Disease** The gradual depletion of *Ojas*, which Ayurveda considers the essence of immunity, is one of the most significant outcomes of *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran*. When *Ojas* is compromised, the body's ability to defend against infections and disease weakens, leading to a greater susceptibility to illnesses and prolonged recovery times. Chronic immune suppression due to poor lifestyle choices silently reduces the body's resilience, leaving it vulnerable to both infectious diseases and non-communicable chronic conditions. Over time, this lack of immunity accumulates, creating a high-risk profile for conditions such as autoimmune disorders, chronic fatigue, and frequent infections.⁷⁵
6. **Accelerated Aging and Cellular Damage** *Ratri Jagaran* prevents the body from undergoing natural cellular repair and rejuvenation processes that typically occur during restful sleep. This ongoing interruption accelerates aging, contributing to oxidative stress, cellular damage, and an increased risk of degenerative diseases. Research has shown that poor sleep quality and erratic eating are linked to increased inflammation, a major factor in aging and chronic disease development. These subtle, silent processes lead to visible signs of aging, such as skin issues, memory decline, and reduced physical vitality, further establishing *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* as contributors to premature aging.⁷⁶

Conclusion

Vishamashan (irregular eating habits) and *Ratri Jagaran* (night-time wakefulness) have emerged as silent threats to health in modern times, often overlooked but carrying significant long-term consequences. Rooted in Ayurvedic wisdom, this study reveals how these lifestyle patterns disrupt the balance of *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—and weaken *Agni* (digestive fire), resulting in *Ama* (toxins) accumulation and depletion of *Ojas* (vitality and immunity). These imbalances contribute to a wide range of health issues, including digestive disorders, mental health challenges, metabolic syndrome, and reduced immunity, aligning with the rising incidence of lifestyle disorders today. *Vishamashan* and *Ratri Jagaran* represent more than just habits; they are silent disruptors that undermine physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Recognizing these practices as *Prajnaparadha* (crimes against wisdom) in Ayurveda provides a preventive framework for addressing these issues in modern lifestyles. By integrating Ayurvedic principles, individuals can cultivate a balanced lifestyle that promotes long-term wellness, resilience, and harmony with natural rhythms, ultimately supporting a healthier and more sustainable approach to daily life. This ancient wisdom offers a valuable perspective for countering the silent killers of our time, emphasizing holistic prevention as the foundation for enduring health.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST -NIL

SOURCE OF SUPPROT -NONE

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