



Review Article

Volume 15 Issue 05

May 2026

ROLE OF *AHAR*, *NIDRA* AND *BRAHMACHARYA* IN MAINTAINING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

*Dr. Mayank Kumar Dubey¹, Dr. Preeti Sharma², Dr. Meenakshi Chaudhary³

¹PG Scholar, Department of Samhita Siddhant Evam Sanskrit, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College & Research Centre, Gangoh, Saharanpur, U.P.

²Associate Professor & Guide, Department of Samhita Siddhant Evam Sanskrit, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College & Research Centre, Gangoh, Saharanpur, U.P.

³Professor & Co-Guide, Department of Roga Nidan Evam Vikriti Vigyan, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College & Research Centre, Gangoh, Saharanpur, U.P.

*Corresponding Author's Email id - dr.mayankdubey878787@gmail.com

Abstract

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes prevention of disease and promotion of health through proper lifestyle practices. Among its fundamental principles, *Ahar* (diet), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (regulated conduct) are considered the three essential pillars of life, collectively known as *Trayopastambha*. These three factors are responsible for maintaining physical strength, mental stability, reproductive health, immunity, and longevity. Proper *Ahar* nourishes the body tissues and supports digestion; *Samyak Nidra* restores the body and mind; and *Brahmacharya* preserves vitality and promotes self-discipline. Disturbance in any of these pillars leads to physical and psychological disorders. In modern life, irregular diet, disturbed sleep patterns, stress, and uncontrolled lifestyle habits have increased the prevalence of lifestyle disorders such as obesity, diabetes, anxiety, hypertension, and infertility. Ayurveda provides a preventive approach through regulation of these three pillars. This article reviews the classical concepts and clinical importance of *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* in maintaining physical and mental health from an Ayurvedic perspective.

Keywords: *Ahar*, *Nidra*, *Brahmacharya*, *Trayopastambha*, Physical Health, Mental Health

Introduction

Ayurveda is a holistic system of medicine that aims not only to cure diseases but also to preserve health in healthy individuals. The concept of health in Ayurveda includes balance of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni*, *Mala*, and a peaceful state of mind, senses, and soul¹.

Acharya Charaka has described:

“Trayopastambha iti Aharah Swapnah Brahmacharyam iti”

which means *Ahar* (diet), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (regulated conduct) are the three supportive pillars of life². These pillars maintain strength, complexion, happiness, nourishment, and longevity. Classical and modern reviews both describe that disturbance in these three pillars contributes significantly to disease burden and lifestyle imbalance.³

In the present era, unhealthy food habits, inadequate sleep, stress, and lack of discipline have become common causes of physical and mental illness. Therefore, understanding the role of *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* is highly relevant in preventive medicine.

1. Role of *Ahar* (Diet)

Ahar is the primary requirement for life and is considered the first medicine in Ayurveda. Proper food supports body growth, tissue nourishment, immunity, and mental clarity⁴.

Acharya Charaka explains that wholesome *Ahara* promotes:

- *Bala* (strength)
- *Varna* (complex complexion)
- *Ojas* (immunity)
- *Ayu* (longevity)
- *Dhatu Poshana* (tissue nourishment)

Food should be consumed according to:

- *Prakriti* (body constitution)
- *Agni* (digestive power)
- *Kala* (season and time)
- *Matra* (quantity)
- *Desha* (habitat)

Improper diet such as overeating, irregular meals, junk food, and *Viruddha Ahar* (incompatible food combinations) causes *Agnimandya* (weak digestion), *Ama* formation, and disease development.

Proper *Ahar* also influences mental health. *Satvika Ahar* promotes calmness, clarity, and emotional stability, while excessive *Rajasik* and *Tamasik* food may disturb mental balance.

Thus, *Ahar* serves as the foundation of both physical and mental wellbeing.

2. Role of *Nidra* (Sleep)

Nidra is one of the most important biological needs for restoration of the body and mind. Ayurveda explains that proper sleep is essential for happiness, nourishment, strength, fertility, and knowledge⁵.

Acharya Charaka states:

“Nidrayattam Sukham Dukham Pushti Karshyam Balabalam”

Happiness and misery, nourishment and emaciation, strength and weakness depend upon proper or improper sleep.

Modern reviews also describe *Nidra* as one of the *Trayopastambha* responsible for physical and mental wellness and note that proper sleep supports tissue nourishment, strength, immunity, and emotional balance.⁶

Benefits of proper *Nidra* include:

- Tissue repair
- Memory improvement
- Emotional stability
- Hormonal balance
- Immunity enhancement
- Stress reduction

Improper sleep causes:

- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Obesity

- Hypertension
- Cognitive disturbances

Sleep is therefore essential for maintaining both physical vitality and mental peace.

3. Role of *Brahmacharya* (Regulated Conduct)

Brahmacharya is often understood only as celibacy, but in Ayurveda it includes self-control, moderation, disciplined lifestyle, and proper regulation of sexual activity⁷.

It helps preserve:

- *Ojas* (vital essence)
- *Shukra Dhatu* (reproductive tissue)
- *Bala* (strength)
- *Smriti* (memory)
- Mental stability

Excessive indulgence in sexual activity causes depletion of energy, weakness, poor concentration, and psychological instability.

Proper *Brahmacharya* helps in:

- Conservation of vitality
- Better concentration
- Improved immunity
- Reproductive health
- Healthy progeny
- Longevity

A review on *Trayopastambha* with special reference to *Brahmacharya* highlights that imbalance in *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* leads to many disorders and proper *Brahmacharya* is necessary for healthy living.⁸

Thus, *Brahmacharya* supports both physical endurance and mental discipline.

Interrelationship Between *Ahar*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*

These three pillars are closely interconnected.

- Improper *Ahar* disturbs sleep

- Disturbed *Nidra* affects mental control and discipline
- Lack of *Brahmacharya* worsens food habits and sleep quality

Disturbance in one pillar gradually affects the others and creates a cycle of disease progression. Therefore, balance of all three is necessary for complete health.

Ayurveda emphasizes correction of these basic pillars before treatment of disease, which shows its strong preventive approach.

Clinical Importance

Modern lifestyle disorders are commonly associated with disturbance of these three pillars.

Disturbed Pillar Common Disorders

<i>Ahar</i>	Obesity, Diabetes, Digestive disorders
<i>Nidra</i>	Insomnia, Anxiety, Hypertension
<i>Brahmacharya</i>	Weakness, Infertility, Mental fatigue

By correcting *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*, many chronic diseases can be prevented and managed effectively.

Discussion

The concept of *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* reflects the preventive and promotive aspect of Ayurveda. These three pillars are not merely supportive lifestyle factors but essential determinants of physical and mental health.

Among them, *Ahar* is the foremost because life depends upon proper nourishment. In modern society, processed food, irregular eating patterns, and unhealthy dietary habits have significantly contributed to metabolic disorders. Ayurveda explains that proper *Ahar* strengthens *Agni* and prevents *Ama* formation, thereby reducing disease risk.

Nidra plays an equally important role in restoring body functions and mental stability. The growing incidence of insomnia, stress, and depression demonstrates the relevance of proper sleep in present-day life. Classical Ayurvedic wisdom regarding *Nidra* remains highly applicable in modern psychosomatic health management.

Brahmacharya provides the foundation for discipline and conservation of energy. It extends beyond sexual control and includes mental restraint, moderation, and balanced living. This

concept is highly important in present times where stress, addiction, and excessive indulgence are common.

The combined regulation of these three pillars can significantly improve quality of life and reduce the burden of lifestyle disorders. Thus, Ayurveda offers a complete framework for health preservation through proper lifestyle regulation.

Conclusion

Ahar, Nidra, and Brahmacharya are the three major supports of life according to Ayurveda. Proper diet nourishes the body and mind, proper sleep restores physical and mental balance, and regulated conduct preserves vitality and discipline.

In the present era of unhealthy lifestyle practices, the importance of these three pillars has become even greater. Their proper observance helps prevent disease, promote longevity, and improve overall quality of life.

Therefore, the Ayurvedic concept of *Ahar, Nidra, and Brahmacharya* remains highly relevant for maintaining physical and mental health in modern society.

References

1. Shastri AD, editor. *Charaka Samhita* of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika Commentary. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 11/35. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2014.
2. Shastri AD, editor. *Charaka Samhita* of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika Commentary. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 21/36. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2014.
3. Dr. Navya S, Dr. Ranjith Kumar Shetty, Dr. Sri Nagesh KA. A Review on the Concept of Trayopastambha with Special Reference to Brahmacharya. *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences*. 2020. ([Jaims](#))
4. Shastri AD, editor. *Charaka Samhita* of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika Commentary. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 5/81. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2014.
5. Zalak Patel. An Analytical Study on Nidra as a Pillar of Life (Trayopastambambha). *International Journal of AYUSH*. 2026. ([International Journal](#))
6. Priya Singh, S.S. Yadav. Exploring the Sub-pillars of Life: Trayopastambha with Special Reference to Nidra. *International Research Journal of Ayurveda & Yoga*. 2025. ([Iriay](#))

7. Shastri AD, editor. *Charaka Samhita* of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika Commentary. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 5/81. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2014.
8. Dr. Navya S, Dr. Ranjith Kumar Shetty, Dr. Sri Nagesh KA. A Review on the Concept of Trayopastambha with Special Reference to Brahmacharya. Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences. 2020. ([Jaims](#))