



Review Article

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**TRAYOPASTAMBHA IN AYURVEDA: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF AHAR, NIDRA AND BRAHMACHARYA**

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**Abstract**

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes both preventive and curative aspects of health. Among its preventive principles, *Trayopastambha* holds a central position. The term *Trayopastambha* refers to the three subsidiary pillars of life - *Ahar* (proper diet), *Nidra* (proper sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (regulated celibacy or controlled conduct). These three factors are considered essential for maintaining physical strength, mental stability, reproductive health, and longevity. Acharya Charaka and other classical scholars have explained that the human body remains stable and healthy when supported by these three pillars. Disturbance in any one of these leads to disease and imbalance in body and mind. In modern times, unhealthy dietary habits, sleep disturbances, and improper lifestyle practices have significantly increased lifestyle disorders. Therefore, understanding the concept of *Trayopastambha* is highly relevant for present-day health management. This review article discusses the classical references, importance, and practical relevance of *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* in maintaining holistic health according to Ayurveda.

**Keywords:** *Trayopastambha*, *Ahar*, *Nidra*, *Brahmacharya*, Health, Lifestyle

## Introduction

Ayurveda is a holistic system of medicine that focuses on maintaining health and preventing disease through proper lifestyle and natural balance. According to Ayurvedic classics, the body is sustained by fundamental supports known as *Stambhas*. Among them, *Trayopastambha* refers to the three supportive pillars of life: *Ahar* (food), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (regulated sexual conduct/self-control)<sup>1</sup>.

Acharya Charaka has described:

***“Trayopastambha iti Aharah Swapnah Brahmacharyam iti”***

meaning that *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* are the three supporting sub-pillars of life<sup>2</sup>. These are essential for maintaining health, strength, complexion, happiness, and longevity. Modern lifestyle disturbances such as irregular food habits, stress, insomnia, and excessive indulgence have disturbed these pillars, resulting in numerous chronic disorders. Contemporary review articles also emphasize that variation in these three pillars contributes significantly to disease burden and lifestyle imbalance.<sup>3</sup>

This article aims to review the significance of *Trayopastambha* from both classical and practical perspectives.

### 1. *Ahar* (Diet)

*Ahar* is considered the primary requirement for sustaining life. Ayurveda regards food not merely as nourishment but as medicine when consumed properly.

Acharya Charaka states that wholesome food supports:

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

Proper food should be consumed according to:

- *Prakriti* (body constitution)

- *Kala* (season/time)
- *Agni* (digestive power)
- *Matra* (quantity)
- *Desha* (habitat)

Improper food habits such as overeating, junk food consumption, irregular meals, and incompatible food combinations (*Viruddha Ahar*) lead to Agnimandya (poor digestion), *Ama* formation, and disease.

Recent Ayurvedic reviews also describe *Ahar* as the first and most important component of *Trayopastambha* because it directly supports tissue metabolism and body balance<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, *Ahar* acts as the foundation of physical health.

## **2. Nidra (Sleep)**

*Nidra* is another important pillar necessary for restoration and maintenance of the body and mind. Ayurveda explains that proper sleep provides happiness, nourishment, strength, fertility, knowledge, and longevity.

Acharya Charaka states:

***“Nidrayattam Sukham Dukham Pushti Karshyam Balabalam”***

which means happiness and misery, nourishment and emaciation, strength and weakness depend upon proper or improper sleep<sup>5</sup>.

When mind and senses become fatigued and withdraw from their objects, sleep occurs naturally. Proper sleep (*Samyak Nidra*) supports:

- Mental peace
- Tissue repair
- Immunity
- Memory
- Emotional stability

Improper sleep causes:

- Fatigue

- Anxiety
- Obesity
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Lifestyle disorders

Modern literature on *Trayopastambha* also correlates *Nidra* with neuroendocrine balance, cognitive stability, and prevention of psychosomatic disorders.<sup>6</sup>

Hence, *Nidra* is essential for restoring the body and maintaining mental health.

### **3. Brahmacharya (Regulated Conduct)**

*Brahmacharya* does not only mean celibacy; it broadly refers to disciplined control over senses and regulated sexual conduct. It helps preserve physical energy, mental clarity, and reproductive health<sup>7</sup>.

According to Ayurveda, excessive indulgence in sexual activity weakens:

- *Ojas*
- *Shukra Dhatu*
- *Bala*
- *Smriti* (memory)
- Mental stability

Proper *Brahmacharya* helps in:

- Conservation of vitality
- Better concentration
- Strong immunity
- Healthy progeny
- Longevity

Classical and contemporary reviews note that *Brahmacharya* influences both *Ahar* and *Nidra* and plays a major role in maintaining overall equilibrium of life<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, *Brahmacharya* is essential for balanced living and healthy aging.

### **Clinical Importance of *Trayopastambha***

Disturbance in any one of the three pillars can result in disease. Common examples include:

#### **Disturbed Pillar Possible Disorders**

*Ahar*                      Obesity, Diabetes, Digestive disorders

*Nidra*                     Insomnia, Stress, Hypertension

*Brahmacharya*      Weakness, Infertility, Mental fatigue

Modern lifestyle disorders are often rooted in the disturbance of these three pillars. Therefore, correction of *Trayopastambha* forms an important part of preventive medicine.

### **Discussion**

*Trayopastambha* is one of the most practical and preventive concepts described in Ayurveda for maintaining health and achieving longevity. The three pillars - *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* are considered essential supports of life because they directly influence the physical, mental, and reproductive wellbeing of an individual. Acharya Charaka has clearly emphasized that disturbance in these three factors leads to imbalance in the body and ultimately results in disease.

Among the three pillars, *Ahar* is considered the foremost because life itself depends upon food. Proper *Ahar* nourishes the *Sapta Dhatus*, improves *Agni*, enhances *Bala*, and supports *Ojas*. In modern times, irregular eating habits, fast food consumption, overeating, and incompatible food combinations have become common causes of digestive disorders, obesity, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome. Ayurveda explains that these conditions arise due to *Agnimandya* and *Ama* formation caused by improper diet. Therefore, *Ahar* serves as both preventive and therapeutic support for health.

*Nidra* is equally important because it allows restoration of both body and mind. Proper sleep supports tissue repair, hormonal balance, memory, immunity, and emotional stability. Sleep disturbances such as insomnia, late-night awakening, excessive daytime sleep, and mental

stress are common in present-day life and are major contributors to hypertension, anxiety, depression, and cardiovascular disorders. The classical statement “*Nidrayattam Sukham Dukham*” remains highly relevant even today, showing the strong relationship between sleep and health.

*Brahmacharya* is often narrowly interpreted as celibacy, but Ayurveda presents it as disciplined control over senses and regulated conduct. It includes moderation in sexual activity, mental discipline, and control of desires. Excessive indulgence weakens *Shukra Dhatu*, reduces *Ojas*, and leads to physical weakness and mental instability. Proper *Brahmacharya* preserves vitality, improves concentration, and supports healthy progeny. In the present era of stress, addiction, and uncontrolled lifestyle habits, the importance of *Brahmacharya* has increased significantly.

The interrelationship among *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* should also be understood. Improper food habits disturb sleep; disturbed sleep affects mental control; lack of self-discipline further worsens dietary and lifestyle habits. Thus, imbalance in one pillar affects the others, creating a cycle of disease progression. Restoration of all three is therefore necessary for complete health.

From a preventive medicine perspective, *Trayopastambha* provides a strong foundation for combating lifestyle disorders. Diseases such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, infertility, and psychosomatic disorders can be better managed by correcting these basic pillars along with medical treatment. This demonstrates that Ayurveda emphasizes root-cause management rather than only symptomatic treatment.

Hence, *Trayopastambha* is not merely a classical theoretical concept but a highly applicable principle for modern health care. Adoption of proper *Ahar*, *Samyak Nidra*, and disciplined *Brahmacharya* can significantly improve quality of life and promote long-term wellbeing.

## **Conclusion**

*Trayopastambha* represents one of the most practical and preventive concepts of Ayurveda. *Ahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* together form the foundation of healthy living. Proper diet nourishes the body, proper sleep restores the body and mind, and regulated conduct preserves vitality and longevity.

In the present era of stress, irregular food habits, sleep disorders, and unhealthy lifestyle practices, the relevance of *Trayopastambha* has become even greater. By following these three pillars, one can achieve *Swasthya* (health), longevity, and better quality of life.

Thus, Ayurveda offers not only treatment of disease but also a complete guide for healthy living through *Trayopastambha*.

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