

Ancient or Traditional Indian Foods to Save Humanity from Modern Diseases

Dr. Preeti Dharmade

Assistant Professor, SNDT College of Home Science, Pune, (M.S.) India

Abstract

Our Indian people are facing the problem of communicable and non-communicable diseases like different types of cancers, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases-heart attacks, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, liver diseases, kidney diseases, low immunity and toxicity disorders. Every day the cases of all these health problems are increasing. The causes are wrong food choices, environment changes; use of pesticides, fungicides, fertilizers on all types of foods. These causes are very well known and very well studied but still we are unable to prevent our people from development of all these diseases. The need for awareness about our ancient knowledge- Indian traditional foods, traditional recipes and traditional food processing is increased to prevent ourselves from all such non-communicable diseases throughout our life span.

Key Words: Ancient foods, traditional foods, humanity, communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases

Nowadays the health problems are on rise. One fourth Indian Population is facing health issues both non-communicable diseases and communicable diseases due to life style changes, environment changes and inhuman behaviour towards nature. All these reason give rise to progress in cases of different types of cancers, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases-heart attacks, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, liver diseases, kidney diseases, low immunity and toxicity related diseases. Every day the cases of all these health problems are increasing. The causes are wrong food choices, fast food culture, environment changes; use of pesticides, fungicides, fertilizers on all types of foods and IT culture. These causes are very well known and very well studied but still we are unable to prevent our people from development of all these diseases.

The need for awareness about our ancient knowledge- Indian traditional foods, traditional recipes and traditional food processing is increased to prevent ourselves from all such non-communicable diseases throughout our life span. Some people are aware about the side effects of pollution, spraying of chemicals on foods, food adulterants, processed foods and preservatives but they can't avoid consuming such foods due to unavailability of traditional health preventing foods or they don't know the processes which can reduce the exposure to such harmful chemicals and harmful chemical changes during processing or cooking. There are various health preventing phytochemicals present in Indian foods such as curcumin in turmeric or capsaicin in red chilli. If the right choices of the foods would be there with accordance to knowledge of the traditional foods and phytochemicals present in that;

can prevent them from generating all these non-communicable diseases. It will be helpful for people to save themselves from all these diseases.

Cooking food has increased the emissions of greenhouse gases so much which results in global warming. Climate change is also affecting the health. Industrial development has also affected the human body due to various chemicals in the environment and we are suffering from various diseases as a result. Consumption of natural foods and foodstuffs is essential for human beings to avoid all these problems. Fresh fruits and vegetables have natural enzymes that help people heal from various ailments while if we consume maximum natural foods, we get all kinds of vitamins and minerals in the right amount. The nutrients supplement and protein supplements consumption is increased. This can lead to high levels of nutrients and proteins in the body, which can lead to kidney damage and kidney diseases. Considering all these factors, it is clear that the Indian diet and natural foods are very useful and for every ailment there is a variety of food available which is very useful for both humanity and humanities and it has important contribution in protecting animals, nature and finally humanity.

It was observed according to traditional/ ancient diet pattern of Bhil tribal community that seasonal fruits and vegetables are consumed. Milk, milk products, ghee, oil and sugar are not consumed. They consume boiled millets (*Kodo, Kutki, Varai*) instead of rice, boiled pulses and boiled vegetables without seasoning¹. All above selection of food and cooking procedure give them maximum benefits of natural nutrients and

phytochemicals and prevent them from diseases.

Indian traditional or ancient foods are rich in nutrients, phytochemicals, antioxidants, probiotics, prebiotics and dietary fiber. Foods prepared according to ancient knowledge of ayurveda provide maximum benefit, which heals, helps in weight management and prevent from communicable and non-communicable diseases².

Conclusion

Nature has gifted us all nutrients, antioxidants and phytochemicals through fresh foods. Even our body also can produce antioxidants to prevent us from various diseases if balanced diet is consumed. But due to our wrong cooking or processing methods all important phytochemicals and nutrients required by human beings are destroyed. Consumption of freshly prepared atta and foods is our tradition, but now we are more dependent on processed food, and that increases health problems. Sprouted cereals, millets, legumes and some vegetables seeds sprouts can provide maximum nutrients. Sprouts should be consumed immediately after steaming for few minutes. Leafy vegetables and other vegetables also should not be over cooked and cooked on less than boiling temperature. For nutrient conservation vegetables can be cooked in earthen pots/ slow cooking pot on low temperature and seasoning can be added after cooking. Seasoning should be prepared with less oil and more oil/ghee can be added after turning off the flame. This procedure reduces the nutrient losses and reduces the trans fat formation which prevent us from various diseases. Seasonal fruits and vegetables should be consumed.

References:

1. Qamra S. *et al.* (2009). Food Consumption Pattern and Associated Habits of the Bhil Tribe of Dhar District of Madhya Pradesh, <https://www.nirth.res.in/publications/nsth/27.SR.Qamara.pdf>
2. Sarkar P. *et al.* (2015). Traditional and ayurvedic foods of Indian origin. *Journal of Ethnic Foods* Volume 2, Issue 3, September 2015, Pages 97-109.