

# DIET IS DIVINE - PART 1

(MODERN, *ÂYURVEDIC* AND SPIRITUAL CONCEPTS OF DIET)

## Preface

Modern medicine has conducted an indepth study on the composition of practically all the food items and has derived the amount and percentage of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals in every food item. It describes in detail the functions of these components and the effects of their being deficient or in excess. It also gives guidelines to make one's diet a balanced one.

Âyurveda describes the effects of various biological properties of food like cold, hot, warm, heavy and light and their action on the human body. It elucidates the effect of the taste of food on the body and the mind. It gives guidelines to adjust one's diet as per one's constitution, season, age, etc. It gives in detail the effect of every food item on various tissues and organs of the body and describes dietetic incompatibilities. It also enlists in detail the list of food items which are beneficial or harmful in various diseases and how one should vary the diet in the different stages of the disease. Âyurveda emphasises on the importance of following the recommendations and restrictions of diet as advised by the physician in various diseases. Âyurveda gives details of the arrangement in the kitchen, the arrangement of food items in a dish and emphasises on the importance of hygiene. It also describes how one should serve the courses of food and the rituals one should follow before, during and after meals.

Âyurveda states that one should not indulge in eating tasty dishes. Food should be selected after considering its qualities and considering one's age, constitution, digestive power, the season, etc.

Based on the effects of food on the mind, Āyurveda classifies food into three types – *sāttvik* (*sattva* predominant) food which promotes good qualities, *rājasik* (*raja* predominant) food which stimulates emotions and *tāmasik* (*tama* predominant) food which results in laziness and lethargy.

Āyurveda emphasises that one should never criticise food and should eat it with respect by giving due attention to its taste and aroma. Our life activities as well as our energy, strength, intelligence, memory, lustre of the skin, etc. depend on food. It is important to maintain the body strong and healthy by consuming an appropriate diet so that one can enjoy worldly pleasures by following the rules of Righteousness (*Dharma*) and undertake spiritual practice to attain the Final Liberation (*Moksha*), which is the state of eternal Bliss. As food helps one to attain eternal Bliss, food itself is considered as '*Brahman*'.

This book will prove useful to everyone including students and physicians. By studying and following the guidelines given in this book, everyone can enjoy a long, healthy, useful and happy life.

Lord Vishnu is the deity which controls the production, digestion and utilisation of food. We pray unto Lord Vishnu to bless everyone with a divine life.

ॐ विष्णवे नमो, विष्णवे नमो, विष्णवे नमः ।

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