CHAPTER 5

FOOD AND DIET CONTROL IN NATURE CURE

5.1 Introduction

Hippocrates said long ago, "Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine be thy food". Nature Cure believes and emphasizes that the 'right food is the best medicine.'

Malnutrition is the most important problem of modern food habits. Our body needs sixteen essential elements which have specific tasks to perform to achieve a common goal - health. These elements are Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen, Hydrogen, Chlorine, Flourine, Phosphorous, Iron, Calcium, Potassium, Magnesium, Sodium, Manganese, Sulphur, Silicon and Iodine. A diet that fails to contain a certain proportion of these organic salts is certainly worthless. For example, Bread, Meat, Potatoes and other over cooked food often lose much of their mineral salts. This food is acid forming being deprived of its alkaline requirements. It does not neutralise the acids of the stomach. Meat, for example, decays in the intestine. It forms gas which gets into the alimentary canal. The blood is surcharged with waste materials which block the capillaries. Chronic diseases, weakness and low vitality are traced to the accumulation of waste materials.

Vibrant health is not entirely a gift of God; it results from good nutrition. Good nutrition means the right eating habits. Man needs food for the energy needed for a fruitful existence. The energy does not
come from food alone. There are several other sources of energy. Pranasakthi or Vital Power is the real energy as far as man is concerned. More food does not mean more energy. At the same time, excessive food acts as a tax on vitality.⁴ Therefore, if we don't use food intelligently, it will become a health hazard!

5.2 Importance of Food and Diet Control

Diet control or diet therapy is a science as well as an art.⁵ There are divergent opinions about an ideal optimum diet. However today its importance as a major factor in health is analogous to denying the importance of panchabhutas. The importance of diet control is today clearly acknowledged by all systems of health care. A good hospital always insists upon the services of good dietitians, as diet is the foundation of good health.

The highly varied types of diet would show that the human system is adaptable and can gradually adjust to any type of diet. The diet of every individual varies according to their lifestyle. Besides over a large part of the world the dietary patterns of people are determined by food materials which are freely available in their respective regions.⁶ Diet is being recognized as the most important single factor for promoting either health or disease. According to Sir William Osler, apart from infections and accidents, 90 per cent of the remaining illness and death are due to defective food habits.⁷ Disease is the disturbance of the functions or structure of any organ or part of the body. Chronic diseases are associated with an accumulation of foreign
matter, waste products, dead cells, poisonous elements and dangerous toxins. These poisonous products are the results of lowered vitality, imperfect elimination and faulty digestion brought about by the sluggish functioning of every organ such conditions of the body are due to denatural, demineralised and devitalized foods which have interfered with the natural metabolism of the system. Hence such a diet is the cause for practically all diseases of the body and mind. All chronic disorders are associated in some way or the other with eating habits and one cannot expect a permanent cure until one is educated along the natural dietetic lines.8

Natural food, properly selected, scientifically combined and judiciously administered, have true medicinal value for curing many diseases by supplying the necessary elements in organic form. The organic elements in food preserve the tissues from degeneration and putrefaction. A diet in which there is abundance of these physical and regenerative elements will bring back vitality glowing health and the joy of living.9

A healthy diet contains adequate quantities of six groups of substances viz., proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals and fiber. Water is an essential substance. Proteins, carbohydrates and fats are energy producing. Proteins are needed for the growth and development of the body. A wide variety of vegetable proteins are necessary for the body. Proteins are found mostly in peas, beans other pulses and in grains to some extent.
Fats are found in plants and animals. They provide energy and even a minute quantity helps in growth and repair. Ghee, butter, oil, ground nuts, pea nuts etc. are good sources of fat. Fats are of two types; saturated and unsaturated. Saturated fats tend to increase the amount of cholesterol in the blood. Animal fats such as milk, butter, cheese and meat are highly saturated. Excess intake of such food is resulted in the development of many digestive problems. Most of the vegetable oils are largely unsaturated.

All the fats that contain starch or sugar have a high quantity of carbohydrates. These food items are good sources of energy. There are three main sources of carbohydrates (1) Starch, (2) Sugar and (3) Cellulose. Vitamins are usually complex in nature. The body cannot make them but they are essential for its proper functioning. Since vitamins cannot be manufactured in the body, they have to be supplied through diet. Generally vitamins are classified under nine subgroups such as vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin K, vitamin B1, B2, B6, B12 and vitamin C. Minerals are essential for the formation of bones and teeth, maintaining cosmetic pressure and formation of blood. These minerals include calcium, phosphorous, iron, potassium, sulfur, magnesium, iodine etc. Fiber is of great importance to our diet. It helps the large intestine to carry away the body wastes effectively. All leafy vegetables are fiber rich.

There are three important functions of food nutrients which help in maintaining and nourishing health. (1) Generating energy, (2) Body
building activities and (3) Regulating body process both bio-chemical and bio-physical.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore a balanced diet besides maintaining the above functions should also be capable of replacing the daily wear and tear of the body tissues and bones. Accordingly a balanced diet is meant to supply adequate amounts of nutritive materials for the body and maintain its internal and external functions. If a balance between one third acid forming food and two third alkaline forming food intake is maintained, health hazards may greatly be reduced and acid-alkaline malnutrition can be avoided effectively.\textsuperscript{14}

Some of the basic dietetic principles, which should be practiced by a Nature Cure Practitioner, are as follows:

- Eat simple, natural and wholesome food but not much of it
- Avoid taking excessive animal protein regularly
- Avoid excessive consumption of carbohydrates in the diet
- Eggs should be avoided
- We must use live and raw food as much as possible
- Avoid highly polished rice flour products, sugar, sweets, etc.
- Prefer vegetable fats and oils rather than animal products
- Food materials should contain fresh and green leaves, preferably raw
- Fresh fruits and fresh juice should be used as far as possible
- Use fibrous food materials
We must eat any food materials slowly, masticating the food completely. Don’t mix too many varieties of foods at one meal. Eat moderately and avoid over eating. We must avoid the mixing of incompatible food items. We must avoid eating when emotionally and mentally upset. Select natural and wholesome food and restrict the use of common salt, sugar, ice water and too hot food items.

We must avoid alcoholic beverages and also avoid the regular use of spices. We must prefer absolutely vegetarian foods and restrict or avoid the use of non-vegetarian foods, because our body construction is strictly obeying the principles and structure of vegetarian beings. The World Vegetarian Congress held in Madras in November 1957 has stressed that the structure of the digestive system (the intestine, stomach and liver) of the human beings is like that of herbivorous animals and not that of carnivorous animals.15

A chart showing the comparative anatomy of vegetarians and Non-vegetarians is included in the Appendix-2.

5.3 Balanced Diet

Imbalanced diet cannot help in maintaining good health. Intake of fresh air and regular exercise helps to maintain good health. In short, fresh good, regular exercise, adequate rest and proper discipline in life are the important factors governing sound health.
Table 5-1
Right and Wrong Habits of Eating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right Eating Habit</th>
<th>Wrong Eating Habit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat only natural food</td>
<td>Eating without hunger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat right food at the right time</td>
<td>Eating when mentally agitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderation in eating</td>
<td>Hasty and hurried eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat only when hungry</td>
<td>Eating when physically weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat only when stomach is empty</td>
<td>Drinking during eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat only when there is no discomfort in the body</td>
<td>Swallowing and eating with short intervals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Health management, Dr. C.V. Jayamani

In the Bhagavad Gita, foods are distinguished by the grades of goodness i.e. *Satvic*, *Rajasic* and *Tamasic*, showing what foods are wholesome and what are not. Food items are conducive to longevity, strength and purity of mind and body which give happiness and cheerfulness are agreeable to the *satvic* man. Food items that are very bitter, harsh or pungent are dear to the *Rajasic* kind of man and are the causes of disease of body or depression of mind. Food items, which are half-cooked or half-ripe, polluted and impure, are called *tamasic* kind. Among these three kinds of food, naturopathy suggests the use of *Satvic* food.

The nutritive values of food items is included in the Appendix-3.

16
5.4 **Basic Principles of Nutrition**

"Eka bhuktham Mahayogi
Dwi bhuktham Mahabhogi
Tri bhuktham Maharogi
Chathur bhuktham Mahadrohi".17

Hippocrates said, 'Leave your drugs in the chemists' pot if you can cure the patient with food.18 It is very difficult to lay down hard and fast principles in the matter of food. The ways of men are so diverse that the very same food has different effects on different individuals. Whatever difficulty there may be regarding this question it is the duty of every individual to bestow serious thought on the matter.

The basic principles of nutrition are stated as follows:

1. Eat enough of the right type of food but not much of it when you are hungry. Eat simple, natural and wholesome foods.

2. Avoid too much protein especially in the form of meat, fish and fats. Select nuts, pulses, green vegetables, beans, peas, soyabean, curd with least sour.

3. High protein diet is harmful, a liberal use of carbohydrates (cereals and sugar) in the diet is detrimental to health.

4. Take natural and wholesome foods in the form of whole wheat bread, brown rice, jagari, molasses, fresh fruits and vegetables.

5. Avoid white flour products, polished rice, white sugar, sweets and concentrated syrups.

6. Avoid animal fat except butter or pure ghee. Give preference to vegetable oils and fats.
7. Let fresh green vegetables especially raw vegetable salads form a part of every meal because of their richness in vitamins and minerals.

8. Use fresh fruits or fruit juices freely. They can be taken between meals when hungry as they are easily digested.

9. Eat food with bran containing roughage or cellulose to encourage colon activity. Wheat bran, fresh fruits and vegetables are very useful as they contain cellulose.  

Slow eating and good mastication is essential for good digestion. A variety of meals is far better than variety in a meal. Don’t mix too many foods at one meal. Eat moderately. Food taken in excess of the body’s actual needs is worse than wasted. The instinct of thirst is separate from that of hunger and to be independently satisfied. Eat natural and wholesome food, avoid the use of alcoholic drinks and tea, coffee, cola, white sugar etc.

Table 5-2
Classification of Common Food Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Undesirable</th>
<th>Dangerous</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>Egg</td>
<td>Over cooked and fried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green leaves</td>
<td>Pulses</td>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Degenerated/Preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>Grams</td>
<td>Meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source-Health management, C. V Jayamani
In short, health is a precious gift. Only when it is lost we realise the significance of this simple truth. So in order to maintain good health or to regain lost health, we must eat wisely not for a month or a year but for a lifetime from the cradle to the grave. Get accustomed to eating simple natural foods in moderation, considering that what are excessive leads to ill health and disease. Pay attention to properly combined foods, compatible foods keeping the acid- alkaline balance.
This lifestyle is in short is the modern wholistic health care system in which the food becomes our medicine and medicine becomes our food.

5.5 Fresh (Raw) Diet

Fresh or raw diet has many advantages especially in illness and is the best protection against diseases. It consists of fresh and dry fruits, raw vegetables, nuts, sprouted whole grain cereals and pulses, oil, wheat grass and so on.

Raw fruits and vegetables are ideal foods and may be low in calories but very high in nutritive value. They contain the vitamins and minerals required by the body in their natural state apart from their healing properties. One should safeguard one's health by drinking the juice of fruits or vegetables for an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals. Apart from the value and the healing properties they should not be confused as sole cures.

Uncooked vegetables and fruits are solvents. Their juices dissolve foreign matter in the blood and make it ready for elimination from the body system. Hence they are effective in restoring the body health. Raw juice is essentially meant for overcoming the deficiency of live organisms, mineral salts and vitamins. While fruit juices are the cleaners of the body, raw vegetable juices are the builders of the cells and tissues of the body apart from their value as cleaners and regenerators of the liver and kidneys.
Milk is one of the most important of all available raw foods. But one thing we should understand that one's milk is only delicious and protein rich to one's own kids. Unfortunately man becomes the consumer of other animals' milk. It is an immoral, unscientific and exploitative peculiarity of man.\(^22\)

As for uncooked whole grain cereals, pulses, unsplit dals, peas, beans, they should be soaked in water for about twenty-four hours and then spread out on a damp thick cloth. This is covered by another thick cloth or sack to maintain warmth. It is kept moist by sprinkling water from time to time. After about two days, the grain will be sprouted and be ready for use. They should be eaten with salad adding curd or lemon juice. For preparing salads, sprouted grains should be mixed with other raw vegetables such as cucumber, tomatoes and so on. In place of sprouted grains, grated nuts, dates, figs etc. may be added to the salad.

A diet consisting of fresh uncooked fruits, vegetables and sprouted cereals greatly add intestinal easiness. Uncooked starch is digested rapidly than cooked starch. Uncooked eggs when included in the raw diet destroy the chief advantage of the regime as they greatly encourage putrefaction in the alimentary system.\(^23\)

Man is basically a fruitarian. In that sense fruits are the natural food of man. It is the healthy and hygienic food. The basic quality of food is that it should contain all the five natural elements
(Panchabutas) in it. Fruits contain all these five elements, and hence they are generally considered as the five fold food.\textsuperscript{24} It is the gift of Nature to humanity.

\section*{5.6 Cooked and Uncooked Food Items}

Of the hundreds of thousands of species of animals in this world, man is the only one depends on cooked food. If there are exceptions among the animals, they are those that are reared by man. Even in our case, cooking is a comparatively recent innovation with a history of not more than a few thousand years. Primitive man had no knowledge of the use of fire as a means for cooking food. The primitive people of the bygone era did not have the advantage of the highly advanced medical facilities and the prophylactic measures of the modern age in which we spend enormous amount of money every year. It is doubtful if they had paid any attention at all to the problem of health and disease, yet all available evidence points to the conclusion that they had enjoyed far better health. The primitive man was far more healthy and strong than we are today, because of his fresh and uncooked food habits.

Over cooking will destroy most of the vitamins. If the water used for cooking is drained off, practically all the water-soluble vitamins will be lost. In addition to the known vitamins, there are micronutrients present in natural foods in minute quantities about which we have no knowledge at present. There are hundreds of different enzymes similar to those present in our own bodies, which can play vital roles in
nutrition. Cooking will destroy many of the micronutrients and most of the enzymes. Fresh uncooked food is the original food, which has life in it. Cooked food is dead food. Fruits and nuts should never be subjected to any kind of cooking or heating. Some vegetables like cucumber, carrot, radish etc. must be taken raw.

Some of the advantages of uncooked food are summarized below:-

(1) Uncooked food possesses their vitamins; enzymes, salts, acids, carbohydrates, proteins and fats in an absolutely unimpaired state, as Nature have produced them. Cooking destroys some or most of the vitamins and all the enzymes, depending on the kind of cooking, the temperature and the time taken. Roasting is said to change starch into dextrin, which will be easier to digest, but it is admitted that the process will adversely affect the nutritive value of proteins and grains, which contain both starch, and protein. Regarding fats, it is a fact that prolonged heating may bring about drastic chemical alterations in them and change them gradually from good food to poisonous toxins called ketones.

(2) Uncooked food takes slightly a little more time to eat. Chewing gives the teeth the needed exercise and keeps them strong and healthy. In the mouth, salivary digestion goes almost complete and the food is prepared for easy digestion in the rest of the alimentary canal.

(3) Chewing prolongs savoring of the taste and the flavour and the time taken in eating ensures greater satisfaction and can prevent the habit of over eating.
(4) Uncooked food cannot be adulterated as it is possible and does happen in the case of processed tinned or pickled foods.

(5) Uncooked food leads to an enormous saving of time, labour and travel involved in the process of cooking and also because there is less spoilage.

(6) Uncooked food does not ferment or putrefy in the alimentary canal as in the case of cooked food.

(7) Habitual consumption of uncooked food leads to a distinct improvement in the efficiency of utilization of food for bodybuilding, repair and replenishment and for the release of the energy content of the food.27

As a consequence, there is a significant reduction in the food requirements and there is saving of food and money. There is less load on the digestive system and thus in turn will give the digestive organs more time for rest and for repair and rejuvenation. The fiber of food is more effective in ensuring smooth movement of the food through the alimentary system. It also prevents the disorders of the colon.

5.7 Liquid Diet

Raw juice therapy is a method of treatment for a variety of diseases and fasting with only juice is extensively practised in Nature Cure.28 It is one of the best ways to restore and rejuvenate the body. During raw juice therapy, the capacity of the organs of elimination viz. Lungs, Liver, Kidney and the Skin are greatly increased and masses of accumulated metabolic wastes and toxins are quickly eliminated. It
affords a physiological rest to the digestive and assimilative organs. After the raw juice therapy, the digestion of food and the utilization of nutrients are improved. An exclusive diet of raw juices of fruits and vegetables results in hastening recovery from disease and more effective for cleansing and elimination.

Vegetables are good for vibrant health. They contain large amounts of vitamins besides being rich in roughage or dietary fiber, which helps easy elimination. The composition of vegetables increases the natural resistance power, which prevents diseases. Vegetarian diet is better because of its low cholesterol and essentially unsaturated fat. Most of the vegetables prevent cancer. According to studies available the world over, the incidence of cancer of the colon, rectum, breast, prostate, stomach and lungs are significantly lower among people who eat a lot of green and leafy vegetables. Vegetables in the form of fresh juice or soup helps in rapid and easy assimilation and absorption.

**Tender Coconut Water**

Tender coconut water is the universally accepted liquid diet. It is a comprehensive food and contains all essential elements in the right proportion. It is found to be equal to blood plasma in its qualities and action on the human body. Coconut water taken when hungry has been found to have a soothing effect on the digestive system. During illness this drink acts as an effective agent for reducing inflammation, both internal and external. In the cases of acute diseases like diarrhea,
cholera, dysentery etc. this has been found to replace the lost body fluids due to dehydration very effectively.\textsuperscript{30}

**Banana Stem Juice**

Juice from banana stem is a well known remedy for digestive and urinary disorders. It improves the functional efficiency of kidney and liver thereby alleviating the discomforts and diseased condition in them. It also improves the function of the prostate, gall bladder etc.\textsuperscript{31} It helps to remove the toxins from the body through urine and also helps the removal of stones in the kidney, gall bladder and prostate. Banana stem juice also dissolves blood cholesterol and clears the arteries. It is a good remedy for obesity. In short the banana stem juice clears the excretory organs from all sorts of morbid matters and toxins and give freshness to the body.

**Lemon**

It is an acidic fruit. The juice of the lemon is more acidic than that of tamarind. In case of jaundice, lemons have proved helpful in the curing process. It is also useful in tickling a sluggish liver and in cases of fever when the patient has a bitter taste in the mouth. Such use of lemon is made on the dictates of nature, the moment the trouble is over, and the taste of lemon is also changed.

Other juices include gardenbasil, brahmi, bringaraj, east india rose bay, shankapushti, holi basil (thulasi) punarnave, corinder leaf
water etc. The regular or content use of these juices may prevent many of the common diseases.

5.8 Fruits

Good food should have three qualities. First, it should be complete or wholesome. Secondly it should be fresh and pure. Thirdly it should possess an element of life in it to make it living and life giving food. The wholesome unpolished grains, unpeeled fruits, green leaves and sprouted pulses and cereals are good living food. Whereas fried and over cooked foods are considerably dead food.

Fruit diet is best suited for man and on which they can live healthier and longer. The diet is perfectly compatible with health and strength. All fruits are nutritious and at the same time more suitable for our digestive system. Many of the fruits have medicinal properties also. By eating fruits and nuts, man can build up his body and mind and his energies can sustain his physiological integrity throughout in a natural manner. Fresh fruits are cooling, refreshing and tend to correct constipation.

Fruits are worthy to have an important place in our diet. Fruits are highly desirable food because of their valuable sugars as well as their content of vitamins, minerals, salts, acids and cellulose. The carbohydrate of fruits are chiefly in the form of sugar, dextrin and acids which are usually ready for absorption. They should form an essential part of the diet because their alkaline properties contain a
high percentage of water, a low percentage of proteins and fat and it is relatively high in carbohydrate content. Their calorie value, which is limited, depends largely on the amount of sugar, which they contain.

All ripe fruits are easily digestible in a raw state when properly masticated. In the fresh fruit juice, the nutritive materials easily accounts for the immediate refreshing effects experienced by a fatigued person. The refreshing action is not only the result of the organic acids but it is also induced by the large quantities of sugar contained in some fruits. Just as in cereals important salts are lost by the removal of the skin. A healthy person should always eat fruits in the raw ripe state. When cooked, fruits lose not only a portion of the nutrient salts, but also of the carbohydrates and a considerable part of the sugar. But for those who are ill or delicate or suffer from a weak digestion the fruit may be stewed. To increase the content of nutrition and organic acids of the fruits, they must be allowed to ripe on the tree themselves. Such ripe fruits gathered from the tree will be better in flavour, vitamin and mineral elements.

A very good way to eat fruits is to take it as a meal by itself. It should be well chewed because the saliva in the mouth contains a substance, which is necessary for its proper digestion. The most wholesome fruits are the juicy fruits while they are low in starches, fats, and proteins and they contain a large amount of the positive organic mineral salts (vitamins). They are therefore Natures' own
medicines, rich in natural stimulants, purifiers, antiseptics, anti helminthes, and febrifuges.

‘An apple a day keeps the doctor away’, is a very common saying. This actually denotes the use of fruits. It stresses the fact that the use of fruit is very necessary for a healthy person. Apple, avocado, banana, strawberry, raspberry, gooseberry, blackberry, guava, lemon, mango, watermelon, mussel melon, orange, papaya, pineapple etc. are some of the fresh fleshy fruits. Dried fruits such as apricots, dates, figs, prunes, resins etc. are also used and they promote a balanced diet and proper health.

5.9 Nuts and Oilseeds

Nuts are highly nutritious and represent Nature’s most concentrated foodstuff. They contain valuable minerals such as potassium, magnesium, calcium, phosphorous, fibrous cellulose and pure organic oils. In different kinds of nuts, the amounts of these minerals vary considerably. They are low in carbohydrates with the exception of the chestnut, but high in protein content.

By the judicious use of nuts, one can secure proteins of high biological value. There is relatively a large amount of basic amino acids in nuts and oilseeds. In addition to this they possess all the ingredients that go to make a perfect food. In case of diabetes, nuts are more preferable because of their negligible starch content. They are especially rich in tissues and bone building elements and can therefore
be recommended for growing children. The percentage of water in nuts is very low. Nut butter is superior to extracted or isolated fats, whether of animal or vegetable origin. Nuts are an excellent remedy for nervous disorders and an ideal food for the brain on account of their richness in phosphorous. They act as a tonic and energize the genital organs. They are highly regenerative for a weak organism.

Nuts, being very rich in protein, care should be taken when combining them with other foods. They should never be taken with starches for as we have already mentioned before starch is digested in the mouth and protein in the stomach.\textsuperscript{34} Hence different digestive juices are required to digest starch and protein. Nuts digest quicker when they are taken alone or at least when consumed with fruits. Nuts can be taken in the form of nut butter, nut sandwich and so on.

Badam, groundnuts, walnuts, chestnuts, cashew nuts, coconuts etc. are the important nuts. Among which, coconuts, groundnuts etc. are the best examples for oil seeds. We have been emphasising the evils of refined and processed products but the refinement and processing of oils for culinary purposes seem to be badly neglected. In the process of hydrogenation great heat and pressure are used and the nutritive value of oil is diminished. Fats and oils are a necessary part of nutritional balance. It is safe to inject natural fats but improperly processed fats should be avoided.
Animal oils are indigestible if foods are fried in them and they become over heated. Burned fat contains acrolein, an irritating and highly poisoned liquid developed during burning. Vegetable oils are wholesome, economical, and used also for medicinal purposes especially extracted through natural pressing of traditional ways. Olive oil, sunflower oil, cottonseed oil, peanut oil, sesame oil, coconut oil etc. are the important vegetable oils.

5.10 Pulses and Cereals

Pulses or dais have the same qualities of legumes but they are easily digestible. There are different kinds of dais like mung, turmaser, urad, arhur, chana, etc. Their chief value lies in the large amount of protein they contain. They are rich in iron and phosphorous and also vitamin B, but poor in certain mineral elements such as calcium, sodium, and chlorine.

Dals are prepared in various ways. They are eaten cooked; chapattis are made out of the flour Dais contain very little vitamin A and vitamin C; But vitamin C can be increased from dal, peas, beans by sprouting them.

Cereals are substances derived from plants yielding grains or seeds as food. Cereals are synonym for grains as cereals are defined as grains and grains as cereals. The most important cereals are rice, wheat, oats, corn, rye, millet, jowar, kodri, barley etc. Grains furnish the bulk of the worlds’ food supply, as they are the worlds’ staple
foods. Cereals as a class are easily digested and they are important as sources of energy and also they can be eaten freely by all. The whole grain cereals make significant contributions of iron, thiamin and riboflavin to the diet.

The essential part of the philosophy of Nature Cure is the advocacy of whole-grain-products. If people were to take whole grain cereals with all the essential parts, it would make a world of difference in their health. If seeds are to be used as food, the whole seed must be employed to ensure complete nutrition. Ignorance of the fact has resulted in sickness and death of many who live on polished or refined grains.

In the refining of whole wheat, the precious wheat germ is removed. When we remove the germ, we remove the very life of the grain of wheat, because in the wheat germ, there is an oil which is indeed a great nutrient to man. In wheat germ there is present Vitamin E, known as the anti sterility of sex vitamins. We have developed a taste for the refined, concentrated, soft products of civilization and has led to a great increase in many degenerative and deficiency diseases. Demineralising the food means deminarilising the blood and organs and thus making them more susceptible to disease. The refining of grains to retain only the endoplasm is based on a commercial point of view, since such material is soft, looks cleaner, is better in taste and well adopted in the making of bread and other delicacies.
Rice is used as a staple cereal by a majority of people in India. Wheat is the most abundant single source of food used in India next to rice. Whole wheat is superior in protein, starch, vitamins, minerals and cellulose content. Bajra or millet is next to whole wheat as one of the most nutritious of the cereal grains. Bajra contains a significant amount of the B-vitamins like thiamin, riboflavin and vitamin A and iron. Ragi is an important and in certain respects has an advantage over other cereals as it is an easily digestible food even for the young and the invalid; besides this, it has also a high calcium content. There is some amount of iodine, which is good for diabetics probably because of the slow digestion resulting in slow rate of release of glucose. Jowar is rich in carbohydrates and in protein content and B-complex. It is better than rice. Barley, corn, oats, rye etc. are the other cereals. Arrowroot powder is pure and is a valuable food for the invalids; it is easily digested in cases of gastric irritation. It is usually given for looseness of the bowels.

5.11 Plants and Leaves

All animals need green plants to survive. Using the natural elements, the plants grow on earth and store up energy in their roots, stems and leaves. The leaves are the most important and useful part of the plant. When the animals eat the plants, energy stored up in the plant body enters the body of the animals. From the green leaves eaten by the animals grow the bones, meat and milk, which will be the food for another animals. Some plants and leaves have great medicinal
values. Even prehistoric people knew about its medicinal values. Ancient Indians were experts in herbal treatment.

Table 5-4

Food and Medicinal Values of Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Plants Rich in Food Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curry leaves (Murraya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coriander leaves (mali)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drumstic leaves (muringa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian mint leaves (pudina)</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Plants Rich in Medicinal Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holi Basil (thulsi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>bermuda grass (karuka)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spreading hogweed (hazhuthama)</td>
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<td>Inian basil (koovalam)</td>
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<th>Features of Quality Food</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wholesomeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshness</td>
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<td>Living nature</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Wholesome rice, wheat etc. | Wholesome fruits, vegetables etc. | Green leaves, sprouts, nuts etc. |

Source—Health management: Dr. C.V. Jayamani

5.12 Conclusion

This chapter points out that malnutrition is the cause of all ill health in the present day society where men are alienated from the concept of vegetarianism, which is suited for them. It also gives the necessity of keeping a balanced diet and exposes the nutritional values of natural food.
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