



Sattva: A Shield Against Lifestyle Disorders- Insights from Shrimad Bhagavad Gita

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ABSTRACT: In the contemporary landscape of health and well-being, where lifestyle disorders pose a growing threat to public health, endeavouring the holistic wellness paradigm of *Sattva*, a foundational concept within the *Bhagavad Gita* may serve as a shield in the prevention and management of these health conditions. *Sattva*, one of the three gunas alongside *Rajas* and *Tamas*, is explored for its potential in promoting overall well-being and guarding against lifestyle disorders. This study comprehensively examines the impact of *Sattva* on various dimensions of health, including its role in maintaining equilibrium through a balanced diet whilst promoting mindful eating practices for weight management, focusing on mental harmony through stress management, meditation, yoga, regular exercise, and healthy sleep patterns. *Sattva* also focuses on fostering positive relationships and management of stress emphasizing a holistic approach to health. This research paper, intertwines ancient wisdom with contemporary health challenges. It highlights the *Bhagavad Gita's* teachings as a timeless guide, offering insights into the intricacies of *Sattva* and its role in promoting an individual's holistic health. *Sattvic* lifestyle thus may help in safeguarding one against prevalent lifestyle disorders, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and stress-related conditions.

Keywords: *Sattva*, Ayurveda, Balanced Diet, Well-being, Lifestyle Disorders, Holistic Health.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades the world is witnessing a paradigm shift from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases, lifestyle disorders being a subset of it (Mathur & Mascarenhas 2019). The Bhagavad Gita, a sacred scripture of Indian literature elucidates how embracing *sattva* can help cope with the increasing burden of lifestyle diseases. With its timeless wisdom, the Bhagavad Gita provides invaluable insights for understanding and addressing the root causes of lifestyle disorders.

Bhagavad Gita and Sattva

In chapter 14th verse 5 of the Bhagavad Gita Shree Krishna says to Arjuna “*Sattvam rajas tama iti gunah prakriti-sambhavah nibadhnanti maha-baho dehe dehinam avyayam*” (Maharaja, 2011). This verse elucidates that all living beings possess three gunas or traits, namely *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Depending on the dominance of a particular trait, the being exhibits qualities reflective of that *guna*. The verse underscores the inherent connection between the qualities of these *gunas* and their impact on the nature and behaviour of individuals. The term “*Sattva*” literally means essence, purity and character of mind (Joglekar & Bhojani 2022). *Sattva* emerges as superior to *Rajas* and *Tamas* in terms of health and the prevention of lifestyle disorders due to its inherent qualities of balance, purity,

and harmony (Satpal *et al.*, 2018). These traits contribute to overall well-being by promoting a balanced and mindful approach to both mental and physical activities. *Sattvic* practices—such as meditation, mindful eating, and stress mitigation—are associated with improved mental clarity and emotional stability, which are critical in addressing lifestyle diseases.

Sattva is associated with mental clarity, emotional stability, and a calm mind, which collectively contribute to overall well-being. Unlike *Rajas*, which, when excessive, can lead to restlessness and heightened stress, and *Tamas*, which may result in inertia and lack of motivation, *Sattva* promotes a balanced and mindful approach to both mental and physical activities. *Sattva's* influence extends to promoting holistic well-being by addressing mental, physical, and spiritual aspects, offering a comprehensive preventive approach to lifestyle disorders. *Sattvic* practices, including mindful eating and activities such as meditation, stress mitigation, fostering positive lifestyle choices, aids in maintaining a tranquility between the body and mind. Studies have demonstrated the benefits of a *Sattvic* lifestyle in various health domains. For instance, Jacobs (2018) found that individuals adhering to a *Sattvic* diet exhibited reductions in body weight, blood glucose levels, and cholesterol.

The brain serves as a pivotal orchestrator in influencing lifestyle disorders through intricate regulatory processes (Hautekiet *et al.*, 2022). It manages neuroendocrine functions, impacting metabolism, stress responses, and energy balance, all of these have a significant impact on disorders like obesity and diabetes. A *Sattvic* lifestyle is associated with mitigating the impact of the brain on lifestyle disorders through stress reduction practices, a balanced and wholesome diet, promotion of emotional well-being, mindful living, autonomic nervous system balance, and the cultivation of positive habits. In essence, the inherent qualities of *Sattva* position it as a superior force, guiding individuals toward a balanced and preventive approach to health, which is crucial in the context of prevention from lifestyle-related health challenges (Kalra *et al.*, 2018).

Understanding Sattva

The *Bhagavad Gita* teaches us about the intertwined nature of the world, consisting of two essential components: the material (*Prakriti*) and the spiritual (*Purusha*). The spiritual essence, known as *Purusha*, is immeasurable and is the vital force that gives life. The material *guna* (*Prakriti*) is characterized by three

qualities, or *gunas*: clarity (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*), and inertia (*tamas*). These qualities manifest in various proportions across nature.

The term "*Sattva*" originates from the Sanskrit language, where it is derived from the root word "*Sat*," denoting "being," "existence," or "reality," with the addition of the abstract suffix "-*tva*." "*Sattva*" characterizes the quality of the mind and character, representing virtues like clarity, compassion, and serenity. *Sattva*, often described as the quality of goodness and light, is associated with mental clarity, tranquility, and a harmonious disposition. *Bhagavad Gita* proposes that an individual with a dominant *Sattvic* nature tends to make choices that nurture overall well-being, including a balanced diet, regular exercise, and positive lifestyle habits. Individuals who embrace *Sattvic* principles tend to make lifestyle choices that promote well-being, including balanced diets, regular exercise, and mindfulness. Yogesh & Yogesh (2023) demonstrated that a *Sattvic* diet rich in fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains contributed to improved mental well-being and mood stability.

Table 1: Different forms of Sattva Guna.

| Sr. No. | Type of Sattva | Basic Nature | Qualities Exhibited |
|---------|------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Brahma Sattva | Free from negative emotions like anger, greed, ignorance, or jealousy | Possess sound knowledge and have excellent power of discrimination |
| 2. | Arsha Sattva | Free from pride and ego. They have good self-control | Possess good power of understanding and retention |
| 3. | Aindra Sattva | These humans have devotion to sacred books and God | Possess authoritative speech and behavior |
| 4. | Yamya Sattva | Free from mean and conflicting desires | Possess excellent memory and good qualities of leadership |
| 5. | Varuna Sattva | Free from mean acts and exhibit emotions well | Possess extreme discipline towards cleanliness and have hatred towards messiness |
| 6. | Kubera Sattva | Free from impure thoughts | Possess good courage. Express emotions like anger and pleasure at the right place and time |
| 7. | Gandharva Sattva | Free from attachment to wealth and luxury | Possess expertise in performing arts like poetry, singing, dance, etc. |

A growing body of research supports the impact of *Sattvic* practices on the prevention of lifestyle disorders. A study by Jena *et al.* (2018) revealed how *Sattvic* habits promote neuroendocrine stability, improving hormonal regulation of cortisol and insulin—both critical in metabolic and stress-related disorders. In the similar research it was found that *Sattvic* lifestyle helps prevent Type 2 diabetes by improving insulin sensitivity and reducing inflammation. However, existing research lacks comprehensive exploration of the long-term cognitive and emotional health outcomes associated with *Sattvic* interventions.

Furthermore, while Saboo *et al.* (2023) found that combining *Sattvic* diets with yoga and meditation reduced cardiovascular risk factors, integration of these practices into conventional medical treatment remains under-researched.

Lifestyle disorders: An emerging global health concern. The surge in globalization and economic advancements has been paralleled by a concerning rise

in the prevalence of lifestyle diseases on a global scale. Lifestyle diseases, categorized as a subset of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), have emerged as a formidable public health challenge, capturing the attention of health organizations worldwide. In 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) accounted for approximately 74% of the total global mortality. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like cardiovascular diseases (CVD), stroke, diabetes, and specific types of cancers are intricately associated with individual lifestyle preferences. Consequently, these conditions are commonly referred to as lifestyle diseases. The term "lifestyle diseases" stems from the fact that the development of these ailments is closely tied to one's choices and behaviours. Given that lifestyle diseases give rise to persistent or chronic health conditions, they fall under the broader category of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The obesity rate in India stands at 40.3% (Venkatrao *et al.*, 2020) and the anticipated trend indicates a

significant rise in the overall occurrence of overweight and obesity in India by the year 2040. This increase is expected to be particularly noteworthy among individuals residing in rural areas and the elderly population (Luhar *et al.*, 2020). Being a significant risk element for conditions like type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, obesity is also implicated as a contributing factor in neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.

Around 537 million adults, accounting for 10.5% of the global population aged 20 to 79, are estimated to be affected by diabetes. Projections indicate a rise to 643 million by 2030 and a further increase to 783 million by 2045. The incidence of diabetes in South-East Asia (SEA) nations has been steadily increasing for at least two decades, surpassing earlier predictions, as highlighted in the IDF 10th edition (Kumar *et al.*, 2023).

As of 2016, approximately 54.5 million individuals in India were estimated to be affected by cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). One out of every four deaths in the country is now attributed to CVDs, primarily driven by ischemic heart disease and stroke, which collectively account for over 80% of this mortality burden. Cardiovascular diseases have emerged as the leading cause of death in India, marking a significant epidemiological shift. This transition is largely attributed to the increased prevalence of CVDs and associated risk factors such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, atherosclerosis, and heightened stress levels (Abdul-Aziz *et al.*, 2019).

A risk factor is any element that heightens the probability of injury, illness, or other health complications. Numerous risk factors, encompassing both controllable and uncontrollable aspects, play a role in determining an individual's susceptibility to the development of lifestyle diseases. Table 2 mentions several controllable and uncontrollable factors encompassing lifestyle diseases.

Table 2: Factors responsible for causing lifestyle diseases.

| Controllable Factors | Uncontrollable Factors |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Diet, body weight, daily levels of physical activity, levels of sun exposure, smoking and alcohol intake | Age, gender, ethnicity, heredity |

The combination of four healthy lifestyle factors- maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, following a healthy diet, and not smoking- seem to be associated with as much as an 80 per cent reduction in the risk of developing the most common and deadly chronic diseases.

Association between the tri-guna philosophy and lifestyle disorders

Bhagavad Gita chapter 14 verse 10

“Rajas tamaśh chābhibhūya sattva-bhavati-bhūrata rajah sattva-tamaśh chaivash tama-sattva-rajah tathā”

Sometimes goodness (*sattva*) prevails over passion (*rajas*) and ignorance (*tamas*), O scion of Bharat. Sometimes passion (*rajas*) dominates goodness (*sattva*) and ignorance (*tamas*), and at other times ignorance

(*tamas*) overcomes goodness (*sattva*) and passion (*rajas*).

Drawing parallels from the analogy of aspirations inculcated amongst people at various stages of life is an effective way to understand the impact of the three *gunas* on oneself. Often, a person is encouraged to be ambitious and success-driven, reflecting qualities associated with *rajo-guna*. This emphasis on achievement, competition, and constant success-seeking can lead to a lifestyle characterized by high stress, irregular eating habits, and neglect of physical well-being. Extending this analogy to issues like obesity in adults, we see how the dominance of *rajo-guna* may contribute to unhealthy eating patterns, reliance on fast food, and a sedentary way of life. The stress associated with the pursuit of constant success can take a toll on overall health. Moreover, adults may exhibit *tamo-guna* characteristics through activities like excessive screen time, overindulgence in entertainment, or self-gratifying behaviours. Seeking pleasure and escape in these activities may lead to a lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating habits, and, consequently, an increased risk of obesity. To promote a healthier and more balanced lifestyle among adults, there should be a shift towards encouraging individuals to balance their ambitions with a sense of contentment and overall well-being. This aligns with *sattva-guna*, emphasizing qualities like mindfulness, balance, and a holistic approach to personal growth that includes both mental and physical well-being. Striking this balance can contribute to preventing health issues such as obesity and fostering a more fulfilling and sustainable way of life for adults.

Lifestyle disorders and Sattva

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 17th Verse 3

“Sattvānūrūpā sarvasya śhraddhā bhavati bhūrata śhraddhā-mayo ‘yam-purusho yo yach –chhraddhah sa eva sah”

The above verse elaborates the fact that where we decide to place our faith and what we choose to believe in practically shapes the direction of our life. Faith can influence lifestyle habits in various ways. Positive aspects may include encouraging healthy practices like regular exercise, balanced diets, and abstaining from harmful substances. However, some religious or cultural practices may contribute to sedentary lifestyles or dietary patterns that could potentially lead to lifestyle disorders.

Obesity and Sattva. Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health. A body mass index (BMI) over 25 is considered overweight, and over 30 is obese. The issue has grown to epidemic proportions, with over 4 million people dying each year as a result of being overweight or obese in 2017 according to the global burden of disease.

In the realm of obesity prevention, the incorporation of Sattva, unfolds as a holistic strategy that transcends dietary guidelines to encompass mindful living and emotional well-being. Sattva, characterized by purity, clarity, and tranquillity, plays a pivotal role in preventing obesity through multifaceted approaches. The encouragement of mindful eating practices within

Sattvic living promotes an acute awareness of hunger cues and fosters a balanced approach to meals, averting overeating. The Sattvic diet, comprising fresh, plant-based foods, not only provides essential nutrients but also mitigates the risk of excessive calorie intake. Beyond dietary considerations, Sattva advocates for stress reduction through meditation and yoga, acknowledging the detrimental impact of chronic stress on obesity. Moreover, the promotion of balanced physical activity aligns with the Sattvic principles of living life, reinforcing the body-mind connection crucial for weight management. Emphasizing emotional well-being and cultivating healthy habits, Sattva emerges as a comprehensive framework for obesity prevention, acknowledging the intricate interplay between mental states, lifestyle choices, and overall health. Therefore; integrating Sattvic principles into personalized health approaches holds promise for a more nuanced and effective strategy in the prevention and management of obesity.

Diabetes and Sattva. Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a metabolic disorder characterized by elevated blood glucose levels. It encompasses various categories, such as type 1 (T1DM), type 2 (T2DM), maturity-onset diabetes of the young (MODY), gestational diabetes, neonatal diabetes, and secondary forms linked to endocrinopathies or steroid use. The primary subtypes, T1DM and T2DM, result from impaired insulin secretion (T1DM) and/or action (T2DM). T1DM typically manifests in children or adolescents, while T2DM is associated with middle-aged and older adults who develop prolonged hyperglycemia due to unfavourable lifestyle and dietary choices.

Exploring the intricate relationship between diabetes and Sattva unveils a promising avenue for holistic diabetes management. Diabetes, marked by irregular blood sugar levels, is profoundly influenced by lifestyle choices and stress. Within the context of diabetes, understanding the role of Sattva becomes pivotal. A Sattvic diet, characterized by fresh, whole foods, aligns seamlessly with dietary recommendations for diabetes management, fostering stable blood sugar levels. The emphasis on mindful eating within Sattvic living enhances awareness of portion sizes, contributing to effective diabetes self-management. Furthermore, Sattva's stress-reducing practices, encompassing meditation and yoga, hold promise in mitigating the impact of chronic stress—a significant contributor to diabetes. The holistic ethos of Sattva extends beyond diet and stress reduction to encompass a balanced lifestyle, promoting regular exercise and adequate rest, both essential components of diabetes care. By fostering positive emotional states and highlighting the interconnectedness of the body and mind, Sattva emerges as a comprehensive framework that complements conventional diabetes management strategies.

Cardiovascular Diseases and Sattva. The cardiovascular system comprises the heart and its network of blood vessels. Cardiovascular disease, commonly known as heart disease, encompasses four main conditions: coronary artery disease (CAD), also known as coronary heart disease (CHD),

cerebrovascular disease, peripheral artery disease (PAD), and aortic atherosclerosis.

The intricate relationship between cardiovascular diseases (CVD) unfolds a comprehensive understanding of heart health, accentuating the significance of lifestyle choices and stress management. Cardiovascular diseases are often rooted in multifaceted lifestyle factors. Examining the role of Sattva in cardiovascular health illuminates its impact on dietary practices, stress reduction, and overall well-being. Embracing a Sattvic lifestyle aligns with cardiovascular health recommendations by advocating for a balanced and heart-friendly diet, emphasizing fresh, whole foods. Moreover, Sattva's stress-alleviating practices, such as meditation and yoga, offer potential avenues for managing the chronic stress implicated in cardiovascular diseases. Sattva's philosophy transcends conventional wellness practices, extending its principles to encompass a holistic lifestyle. It underscores the significance of incorporating regular exercise and ample rest into daily routines to mitigate risk factors like obesity and hypertension. Going beyond the physical realm, Sattva places a strong emphasis on cultivating positive emotional states, recognizing the profound connection between mental and physical well-being. In doing so, Sattva advocates for a comprehensive and integrated approach to cardiovascular health that addresses not only the body but also the intricate interplay of emotions and overall wellness.

Stress-Related Disorders and Sattva. Stress is defined as any internal or external trigger that prompts a biological reaction. The body's compensatory reactions to these stressors are termed stress responses. Depending on the nature, timing, and intensity of the stimulus, stress can induce a spectrum of effects on the body, spanning from disruptions in normal balance (homeostasis) to severe consequences, including life-threatening outcomes and mortality. Stress can function as a catalyst or exacerbating factor for numerous lifestyle-related illnesses.

The principle of Sattva emerges as a comprehensive and holistic approach to stress management, addressing the intricate interplay between mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Characterized by mental clarity, tranquility, and a spiritual connection, Sattva offers a multifaceted framework that encompasses both proactive and reactive strategies for stress management. Practices intrinsic to Sattvic living, including meditation, mindfulness, and yoga, have demonstrated efficacy in reducing stress by lowering cortisol levels and inducing a state of relaxation. The emphasis on positive emotional states and the cultivation of resilience contribute to emotional well-being, countering the detrimental effects of chronic stress. Mindful living, another cornerstone of Sattvic principles, encourages being present in the moment, mitigating the impact of stressors by preventing dwelling on past regrets or future anxieties. Furthermore, the promotion of a balanced lifestyle, encompassing regular exercise, nourishing dietary choices, and adequate rest, addresses the physical aspects of stress, fostering overall well-being. The

spiritual dimension associated with Sattva provides individuals with a source of strength and purpose, contributing to a sense of resilience during challenging times. The cultivation of positive habits within Sattvic living, such as fostering healthy relationships and maintaining a positive outlook, creates a supportive environment that acts as a buffer against the negative effects of stress. Embracing Sattva in daily life, therefore, stands as a holistic strategy for stress management, offering practical tools and principles that empower individuals to navigate stress more effectively and enhance their overall quality of life.

Sattva: Neurobiological Aspects. Sattvic practices, characterized by a balanced and nourishing lifestyle, including meditation and yoga, may exert potential influences on neurobiological processes. These practices could modulate neurotransmitter levels, with meditation, for instance, being associated with alterations in serotonin and dopamine, crucial players in mood regulation. Additionally, Sattvic living, particularly stress-reducing techniques, may impact the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, thereby influencing the brain's response to stress. Considerations of brain structure and function are pertinent, as Sattvic practices promote mental clarity and tranquility they may contribute to changes in regions associated with attention, emotional regulation, and self-awareness. Furthermore, the potential for Sattvic practices to influence neuroplasticity—a key element of cognitive function—and mitigate inflammation, a factor linked to neurological disorders, warrants exploration. Despite the scarcity of dedicated research, these theoretical connections between Sattva and neurobiology present intriguing avenues for further investigation. Individual responses to Sattvic practices, however, remain a crucial consideration, emphasizing the need for personalized approaches in integrating these principles into a holistic lifestyle.

Immunomodulatory role of Sattva.

Immunomodulation refers to the process of modifying or regulating the immune system's activity. It involves the deliberate alteration of the immune response to achieve a desired outcome, whether it's enhancing the body's ability to fight off infections, suppressing an overactive immune response in autoimmune disorders, or influencing the immune system in other ways. Immunomodulation can be achieved through various means, including the use of immunomodulatory drugs, therapeutic interventions, and lifestyle changes. The goal is to balance and optimize the immune system's function to maintain health and treat specific conditions.

The immunomodulatory potential of Sattva, presents a holistic approach to supporting immune system function. While empirical research specifically probing the immunological effects of Sattva is scarce, foundational aspects of Sattvic living may indirectly contribute to immune balance. Sattvic practices, such as meditation and mindful living, target stress reduction—an essential factor, given the well-established link between chronic stress and compromised immune function. Moreover, the Sattvic emphasis on a balanced lifestyle, incorporating nutritious diet, regular exercise,

and sufficient rest, aligns with known factors influencing overall health, including immune responses. The anti-inflammatory nature of the Sattvic diet, emphasizing fresh and whole foods, introduces a potential avenue for promoting a balanced inflammatory milieu, integral to immune health. The holistic perspective of Sattva, recognizing the interconnectedness of mental, emotional, and physical well-being, suggests that positive emotions and a sense of well-being fostered by Sattvic practices may contribute to a resilient immune system. While these considerations propose a plausible link between Sattva and immune modulation, further scientific exploration is warranted to delineate the specific mechanisms and effects of Sattvic living on immune function. Individual variations in response underscore the importance of personalized approaches in incorporating Sattvic principles for overall well-being, including immune support.

Disease Prevention through Sattva

Sattva: Balanced Lifestyle

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 6th Verse 16

“Nātyaśhnatastu yogo'sti na chaikāntam anaśhnata na chātī-svapna-śhīlasya jāgrato naiva chārjuna”

O Arjun, those who eat too much or too little, sleep too much or too little, cannot attain success in Yog.

There is no possibility of one's becoming a yogi, O Arjuna, if one eats too much or eats too little, sleeps too much or does not sleep enough." This verse highlights the importance of moderation in eating, sleeping, and, by extension, physical activity. A balanced and disciplined approach to these aspects contributes to overall well-being.

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 17th Verse 8

“Ayuh-sattva-balārogya-sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthīrāḥ idyāhārāḥ sātvika-priyāḥ”

The foods that increase life, purity, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are savoury and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are dear to sattvic. these foods are described with the words *āyuh sattva*, meaning “which promote longevity.” They bestow good health, virtue, happiness, and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, naturally tasteful, mild, and beneficial. These include grains, pulses, beans, fruits, vegetables, milk, and other vegetarian foods.

Sattva: Physical Activity

The Bhagavad Gita encourages individuals to fulfill their duties and responsibilities with dedication. Engaging in physical activity can be seen as a way to fulfill one's duties, especially in the context of Arjuna's role as a warrior. In Chapter 3, Verse 8, Lord Krishna states:

“Niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyāyo hyakarmanah śharīra-yātrā pi cha te na prasiddhyed akarmanah”

"Perform your prescribed duties, for action is better than inaction. A man cannot even maintain his physical body without work." This verse underscores the importance of action and fulfilling one's responsibilities, which may involve physical exertion.

In Chapter 2, Verse 62, Lord Krishna discusses the importance of self-control and the consequences of succumbing to uncontrolled desires:

“Dhyāyato vishayān pumsah sangas teshūpajāyate sangāt sañjāyate kāmah kāmāt krodho bhijāyate”

"While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment, lust develops, and from lust, anger arises. From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion, bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost, one falls down again into the material pool."

These verses emphasize the progression from attachment to the objects of the senses to the potential loss of self-control and intelligence. While not explicitly about substance abuse, they highlight the dangers of unchecked desires and the importance of disciplined living.

Sattva: Material Pleasure and Substance Abuse

Chapter 6, Verse 6-7 addresses the need for detachment from material pleasures:

“Nātyaśhnatastu yogo 'sti na chaikāntam anaśhnatah na chāti-svapna-shīlasya jāgrato naiva chārjuna”

"For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, his very mind will be the greatest enemy."

This verse underscores the importance of mastering the mind and cultivating detachment from material pleasures, which could include substances that are often misused.

Embracing Sattva for overall well-being

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 14th, verse 6:

“Tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt prakāśhakam anāmayaṁ sukha-sangena badhnāti jñāna-sangena chānagha”

This verse elucidates that sattva guna, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating and full of well-being. It binds the soul by creating attachment for a sense of happiness and knowledge.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the role of Sattva, as outlined in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in addressing the increasing burden of lifestyle-related disorders. Through this research, it has been established that Sattvic practices, such as mindful eating, meditation, and stress reduction, play a crucial role in maintaining the delicate balance between the body and mind, contributing to neuroendocrine stability, reduced inflammation, and improved metabolic health.

By unravelling the philosophical foundations of Sattva and its implications for lifestyle choices, prevalent health challenges such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and stress-related disorders can be effectively mitigated. Embracing Sattva can be positioned as a timely response to modern health concerns, providing a bridge between ancient wisdom and contemporary lifestyles. When sattva is dominant in a person, the person has strong well-being, is calm, happy, motivated and persevering. Dominant rajas leads to stress, over-activity and restlessness. When tamas becomes dominant, it makes a person pessimistic, depressed and unmotivated. Dominant sattva guna thus

helps a person experience high well-being. Sattva can be strengthened by a number of interventions such as meditation, increasing spiritual awareness, self-regulation and developing virtues. The review of existing literature has underscored the potential of Sattvic lifestyles in reducing the risk factors associated with lifestyle disorders. However, gaps remain, particularly in understanding the long-term cognitive and emotional outcomes, as well as the molecular pathways influenced by Sattvic interventions.

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