***Ritu Charya***

                                               Ritu in Sanskrit means season. As mentioned earlier that ayurveda believes in maintaing health and prevention from disease. India is a land of diversity of seasons. In India there are 6 types of seasons. These are

1.      Shishir (winter season)
2.      Basant (spring)
3.      Gresham (summers)
4.      Varsha (rainy)
5.      Sharad (autumn)
6.      Hemant (early winters)
                 Such a diversity of seasons only occurs in Indian subcontinent. But it can also lead to various troubles if life style is not maintained according to seasons.
                 First we will discuss the impact of sun on earth and on our body as the basic energy on earth is derived from sun. Sun has the direct impact on the vegetation and every living being. Rays of sun have different impacts on human body and vegetation as the intensity of rays and heat vary from season ro season.
                 First we will talk about the intensity and effect of sun on our health i.e. when sun rays fall on northern hemisphere (utrayan kaal) and when rays fall on the southern hemisphere it is called dakshiayan kaal.
                As the sun rays fall directly on the northern hemisphere, this part of the globe experiences summers and this time there is winters in southern hemisphere and vice versa.

·    Uttrayan kaal (Northern solstice)
·    Dakshiayan kaal (southern solstice
·    Hemant Ritu and shishir Ritu
·    Basant Ritu
·    Grisham Ritu
·    Varsha Ritu
·    Sharad Ritu
·    Ritu viparyaya (perverted season)

[**Ritu satmyam**](http://www.ayushveda.com/ayurvedic-lifestyle/ritu-satmyam.htm)
**Utrayan kaal (northern solstice)**                  It is the phase of the earth when sun rays are falling directly on northern hemisphere. The countries above the equator faces summers. In Indian context it is the phase that progress to wards the summer season which falls during the months of January to June. This phase is also known as aadan kaal and is *agneye*i.e. extremely hot in nature*.* This phase faces intense rays and heat of the sun. Due to its property rays from the sun makes the air dry and heated and takes away all the coolness present in air. This character of air makes all the moisture in air to dry and air becomes rough. This makes all the animals and plants gain the ruksh (dry) and filled with katu (pungent), tickt (bitter) and kashaya (astringent) rasa (taste). These factors diminishes strength of an individual. More over environment around him also contributes to this factor. His food is also influenced by these factors. You might have noticed that people get tired during summers easily and also loses their weight. There energy levels also decreases and the stamina fades away. According to ayurveda it includes three ritus (seasons) these are shishir, basant and hemant.
**Dakshiayan kaal (southern solstice)**                    This the phase when sun rays fall directly on the southern hemisphere therefore has great heating effects on that phase but in northern hemisphere rays of the sun falls in slanting way. This phase comes between July to December. In this phase northern hemisphere approaches winters as the rays of the sun are falls slanting. During this phase there is good moisture in air and vegetation is also juicy and pulpy. This phase represent growth of body. In this phase there is good amount of growth. Energy levels in individual are high and stamina is at its peak. This phase is also known as visarg kaal. Due to increase in madhur (swet), amal (sour) and lavan (salt) rasa. Body is provided with good nourishment and is important for good growth in the body. In this phase there is also increase in strength in the body. Dryness also disappears from body and the enviornment. According to ayurveda it included three ritus. These are varsha, sharad and hemant.
**Hemant Ritu and Shishir Ritu**                    Referred to as the season that is the beginning of winters. Indian calendar months are magha-phagun-chaitra-vaishakha According to ayurveda in this season, there is quite dusty environment. Visibility is less, due to fog . There is flow of cold breeze coming from northern direction. Due to cold environment rivers start freezing and thus water level decreases. Birds and reptiles start hibernating. Seasonal plants like (priyangu) callicarpa macrophylla, lodhra (symphlocos racemosa), and lavly (cicca acidc Merrih) starts flowering. According to modern calendar it falls in month of November and December as of hemant Ritu and January and February as of shishir Ritu.
**Effect of Hemant Ritu and Shishir Rituon body**                    Jatharagni (digestive fire) get ignited and appetite increases. Due to this capacity body easily digest guru aahar (heavy food). As this lies in dakshiayan phase hence body grows due to increased appetite. Heavy food is not consumed accordingly then this increased metabolism of the body start consuming bodies dhatus therefore leading to weaknesses body.