

## PHARMACOLOGICAL ASPECT OF GURVADI GUNA

Dr. Deepanjali Bora<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Niten Barman

PG scholar, Associate prof.;

Samhita & Siddhanta dept, Govt. Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Jalukbari,  
Guwahati, Assam, India

## ABSTRACT

A healthy body with a healthy mind is the utmost need of every individual. Ayurveda emphasizes on *siddhantas* (principles) to bring out a healthy outcome. The Classics describes the *siddhanta* (principles) as *tridosha*, *tridanda*, *guna*, *panchamahabhuta*, *dhatu* (body tissues), *mala* (wastes of the body), *sadupakrama* (6 means of treatment), *chikitsa* (treatment), *rasa* (taste), *virya* (potency), *vipaka*, etc for a healthy being. The concept of *Gurvadi guna* occupies a very important place among them. 20 *gurvadi gunas* are explained in the texts. A study of the pharmacological aspect of these gunas signifies that most of the principles laid down in the Ayurvedic texts possess the characteristics of the *Gurvadi gunas*. These *gunas* form the underlying source of the principles. So, a clear understanding of them in the context of different references will provide a better way to diagnose and treat diseases, to the physician. The Ayurvedic texts were studied for reviewing the topic.

**Keywords:** *Gurvadi guna*, *siddhanta*

## INTRODUCTION

The word “*Guna*” is derived from the *dhatu* ‘*guna amantrane*’, which means the basic property which attracts towards itself. In Charaka, it is said that the *guna* remains *samavayi* (inherent property) with the *dravya* (subject), it is *nischesta* (motionless) and is *akarana* (reasonless). 20 *gurvadi gunas* are mentioned in Ayurveda. The evaluation of the pharmacological aspect of the *gurvadi gunas* reveals that the physiological or pathological state of the body relies upon them. The aim of the study is the evaluation of the Pharmacological aspect of *Gurvadi gunas*.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** A detailed study of the Ayurvedic texts were done regarding the topic entitled. The

analysis of the *gunas* is then done.

## DISCUSSION:

The *vimsati*(20) *gunas* mentioned in Charak are: *guru* (heavy), *laghu* (lightness), *seeta* (cold), *usna* (hot), *snigdha* (oily), *ruksha* (dry), *manda* (dull), *tikshna* (sharp), *sthira* (firm), *sara*(moving) , *mridu*(soft), *kathina* (hard), *vishada* (clear), *picchila* (sliminess), *slakshna* (smoothness), *khara* (roughness), *sukshma*(subtle), *sthula* (gross), *Sandra* (dense), *drava* (fluidity)<sup>1</sup>

**Analysis of Panchamahabhuta:**

“*Sarva dravya panchabhoutikam*”<sup>3</sup> As stated in Charak, all *dravyas* are composed of *panchamahabhutas*. No *dravya* can exist without *panchamahabhutas*. These are *Prithvi* (earth), *Vayu* (air), *Apya*

(water), Agni (fire) and Akasha (space). At the time of *dravya utpatti* (origin), there was *anyonyanupravesha* (intermingling)<sup>4</sup> of the *mahabhuta* from one to another. At the last stage, the five *bhutas* intermingled together to form any *dravya*. Thus in any *karya dravya*, the presence of the 5 *mahabhutas* is essential.

From the above table, the analysis of *panchamahabhutas* can be done in the following way:

1. *Prithvi mahabhuta* predominancy is found in these *gunas*: *guru, snigdha, kathina, khara, manda, sthira, vishada, Sandra, sthula*
2. *Jala mahabhuta* predominancy is found in these *gunas*: *guru, drava, snigdha, seeta, mridu, manda, picchilla*
3. *Agni mahabhuta* is found in the following *gunas*: *usna, tikshna, suksma, laghu, ruksha, vishada*
4. *Vayu mahabhuta* is found in the *gunas*: *laghu, seeta, ruksha, tikshna, khara, vishada, suksma*
5. *Akasha mahabhuta* is found in *gunas*: *mridu, vishada, suksma, slakshna*

#### **Analysis of Rasa, Vipak, Virya:**

*Pharmacological actions of the dravya:*  
The pharmacological actions of a *dravya* depends on its *rasa, veerya, vipak*. Charaka said that a physician who possesses the full knowledge of *rasa* and *dosha* will definitely have the knowledge of the *hetu* (cause), *rupa* or *lakshana* (signs and symptoms) and *chikitsa* of any disease.

*Guna* remains in *samavayi* relation with *dravya*. The *vridhhi* (increase) *kshaya* (decrease) *karma* (actions) of any *dravya* depends upon the *gunas* only. As stated in Sushruta samhita,

“*Guna ya ukta dravyeshu sharireshu apite tatha Sthanavridhikshaya tasmad dehinam dravya hetuka*”<sup>5</sup> Six *rasas* are

mentioned in Ayurveda. They are: *madhura* (sweet), *amla* (sour), *lavana* (salty), *katu* (pungent), *tikta* (bitter), *kashaya* (astringent). *Dravyas* are mostly indicated by their *rasas*. Eg: *madhura rasa dravya*

In any *ahara* (diet) induced disease, the *rasas* present in the *dravyas* are the only factors which are responsible to cause the disease. Intake of a particular *rasa* in excess amount, will lead to *dosha* vitiation. As it is stated in all the Classics, 3 out of the 6 *rasas* are responsible for the *vridhhi - kshaya* of the *doshas*. Eg: *madhura, amla, lavana rasas* are responsible for the *vridhhi of kapha dosha* and *kshaya of vata dosha*. Similarly, *katu, tikta, kashaya rasas* are responsible for *vata vridhhi* and *kapha kshaya*. While *amla, lavana, katu* is responsible for *pitta vridhhi* and *madhura, tikta, kashaya* are responsible for *pitta dosha kshaya*.

The selection of a *bhesaja* (medicine) also depends upon the *rasa* of the *dravya* which brings back the vitiated *dosha* to equilibrium. The *dravyas* similar to the *dosha guna* will produce *vikaras* (pathology) while the *dravyas* opposite to the *dosha gunas* will decrease the *vikaras*.

#### **Rasa analysis from table no.1:**

*Madhura rasa* possesses *guna*: *guru, seeta, snigdha, mridu*, *Amla rasa* possesses *guna*: *guru, tikshna, usna, snigdha*, *Lavana rasa* possesses *guna*: *laghu, usna, snigdha, tiksna*, *Katu rasa* possesses *guna*: *laghu, ruksha, tiksna, usna*, *Tikta rasa* possesses *guna*: *laghu, seeta, ruksha, mridu*, *Kashaya rasa* possesses *guna*: *guru, seeta, ruksha, mridu*

The 6 *rasa* possess *gunas* of their own, which will be the *gunas* of the *dravya* itself. Eg: when it is said that *madhura rasa* is *snigdha, seeta* and *guru* in nature, this implies *madhura rasa dravya* is *snigdha, seeta* and *guru* in nature.

Thus it is said that the *ashrayi* of *guna* is *dravya*.

#### **Virya, vipaka analysis:**

In table no.1, it is found that

*Vipaka*: The *gunas* of *Madhura vipak* are: *guru, seeta, snigdha, mridu, sthira*, The *gunas* of *amla vipak* is: *laghu*, The *gunas* of *katu vipaka* are: *laghu, usna, ruksha, tiksna*. *Virya*., *Usna virya gunas* are: *laghu, usna, tikshna, ruksha, Seeta virya gunas* are: *guru, snigdha, seeta, mridu*

Thus, from the analysis of each subject of the table, it is observed that the *panchabhoutik* composition, *rasa, vipak, virya* of any *dravya* are dependent upon its *guna*.

**Gurvadi gunas in relation to prakrita (physiology)/ vikrita(pathology) kriya (function) of the body:** The physiology of the body is made of the *dosha, dhatu* and *mala* in their equilibrium condition.

#### **Gunas of tridoshas:<sup>6</sup>**

*Vata*: *ruksha, sheeta, laghua, suksma, chala, vishada, khara, Pitta*: *sneha, usna, tikshna, drava, amla, sara, katu, Kapha*: *guru, seeta, mridu, snigdha, madhura, sthira, picchila*. The *dosha* in their normal state maintains health. The *dosha* in the *prakrita avastha* possesses/ shows these *gunas* in the body. The *vridhhi, kshaya* state of the *doshas* can be predicted by observing these *gunas* in the body.

#### **Gurvadi gunas in relation to Sadupakramas:**

The *Sadupakramas* mentioned in Charaka are<sup>7</sup>- *Langhana, Brimhana, Stambhana, Swedana, Snehana* and *Rukshana*.

If we analyze the definitions of *Gurvadi gunas*, these can be summarised as: *Laghu- langhane laghu. Guru- brimhane guru. Seeta- stambhane seta. Usna- swedane usna. Ruksha- roukshyam. Snigdha- snehana*

So, it can be said that the treatment is also based upon the *gurvadi gunas* only.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

In Ayurveda, though the fundamentals are the *panchamahabhuta, dosha, dhatu, mala* which form the physiological as well as the pathological conditions of the body, but a mere observation of each of them will infer that the physiological or the pathological conditions of the body are demarcated by the *Gurvadi gunas*. In the *chikitsa* purpose also, these *gunas* play a very major role. As in any pathological condition, there is *vridhhi* or *kshaya* of the *dosha gunas*, the *bhesaj* which are the *aushadhi dravyas*, in which the *gunas* resides, are used by the physician to bring back the *doshas* into the *sama avastha*. The *rasa, virya, vipak* of a *dravya* confide upon *guna*. The *bhesaja* (medicines) are chosen depending upon the above factors. Thus it can be concluded that the *Gurvadi gunas* holds an important position in the field of Ayurveda.

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**Table no.1<sup>2</sup>**

<b>Guna</b>	<b>Panchamaha bhuta</b>	<b>Rasa</b>	<b>Vipaka</b>	<b>Virya</b>
<b>Laghu</b>	Teja + vayu	Tikta, lavana, katu	Amla, katu	usna
<b>Guru</b>	Prithvi+ ap	Madhura, amla, kashaya	madhura	seeta
<b>Seeta</b>	Vayu+ ap	Tikta, madhura, kashaya	madhura	seeta
<b>Usna</b>	Agni	Lavana, amla, katu	Katu	Usna
<b>Snigdha</b>	Prithvi+ap	Madhura, amla, lavana	Madhura	Seeta
<b>Ruksha</b>	Agni+ vayu	Katu, tikta, kashaya	Katu	Usna
<b>Mridu</b>	Akasha+ ap	Madhura, tikta, kashaya	Madhura	Seeta
<b>Tikshna</b>	Agni + vayu	Amla, lavana, katu	Katu	Usna
<b>Sthira</b>	Prithvi			
<b>Sara</b>	ap			
<b>Manda</b>	Prithvi+ ap			
<b>Kathina</b>	Prithvi			
<b>Pischila</b>	ap			
<b>Vishada</b>	Prithvi+ vayu+ Agni+ akash			
<b>Slakshna</b>	Akasha			
<b>Khara</b>	Prithvi+ vayu			
<b>Sthula</b>	Prithvi			
<b>Sukshma</b>	Akasha+ vayu+ Agni			

**CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:**

**Dr. Deepanjali Bora**

PG scholar, Samhita & Siddhanta dept,  
Govt. Ayurvedic College & Hospital,  
Jalukbari, Guwahati, Assam, India

**Email:** deepanjali bora26@gmail.com

**Source of Support:** Nil

**Conflict of Interest:** None Declared