

REVIEW ON SANCHAYA AVASTHA IN THE CONTEXT OF HOMEOSTATIC
IMBALANCE

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ABSTRACT

Life in this universe is maintained because of three opposing factors known as Sun, Moon, and Air. The Sun exerts a drying effect on earth whereas the moon is coolant and strengthening in nature. Air brings about all types of movement in the environment. In an exactly similar manner, the body is sustained by three opposing factors called 'Vata', 'Pitta', and 'Kapha'. These *Sharira Dosha* i.e., *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* are accountable for all kinds of functions in the body. Due to any imbalance in these *Doshas*, they can affect *Dhatus* (Body tissues) and can cause various diseases. The diagnosis of the disease is made with the help of two types of tools namely *Nidana panchaka* and *Shat Kriya Kala*. The former tool consisting of *Nidana*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashaya*, and *Samprapti* are useful in diagnosing the disease on the basis of signs and symptoms. Whereas the second tool consisting of *Chaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthana samshraya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bheda* is useful in understanding the disease process at a very early stage. Particular *Doshas* are located in particular places. These locations are called *Dosha Sthanas* where they exhibit their functions by being in a normal state. When vitiation increases with increasing accumulation, they start occupying more and more places. In the initial stage of the increase of *Dosha*, this accumulation slowly grows and when they occupy the entire volume of their designated locations and start showing abnormal functions, then the condition is called '*Sanchaya*'. In modern science, we can correlate this *Sanchaya awastha* with 'Homeostatic imbalance'. Failure of the body to maintain homeostasis is called Homeostatic imbalance, this is caused by some

factors like stress, alcohol consumption, altered eating habits, sleeplessness, hypoxia, over-exercise dehydration, etc.

Keywords: *Dosha, Dhātu, Nidana panchaka, Kriya kala, Sanchaya, Homeostasis.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda postulates that the human body is chiefly composed of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas*. These elements form the physical components of the body. *Doshas* are of two types i.e., *Sharirik dosha* and *Manashik dosha*. *Sharirik dosha* pertains to the body while *Manashik dosha* pertains to the mind. *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* are the *Sharirik dosha* and these materials are the chief activator of all normal physiological activities of the body. All these three *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas* have certain standards in respect of their *Pramana* (quantity), *Guna* (quality), and *Karma* (functions) which are known as *Samya* (normalcy). This *Samya* is not stable; it undergoes change due to various reasons and becomes *Vikrita* or *Vaishamyā*¹. If any imbalance in *Doshas*, it can affect *Dhatus* (Body tissues) and can cause various diseases. The diagnosis of the disease is made with the help of *Nidana panchaka* and *shat kriya kala*. The former tool consisting of *Nidana*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashaya*, *Samprapti* are useful in diagnosing the disease on the basis of signs and symptoms. Whereas the second tool consisting of *Chaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthana samsahraya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bheda* is useful in understanding the disease process at a very early stage². Particular *Doshas* are located in particular places. These locations are called *Dosha sthanas* where they exhibit their functions by being in a normal state. Increases of *Doshas* in their own sites and produces dislike for things which are the causes of increase and liking for things of the opposite qualities³. If a person is not undergoing the treatment, the vitiated *Doshas* are further developed and evaluated phases of the process of disease. Those are called “*Kriya Kala*”. These *Kalas* help to recognise the *Doshik* disturbance stage, which helps the physician administer the appropriate therapeutic measure to correct the *Doshik* disturbance. Thereby preventing or checking the further development of the disease. The physician

must have the idea of *Doshalaxanas* of all the stages. The initial stage of *Shat kriya kala* is *Sanchaya* or the stage of accumulation. This is the initiative stage of the disease. During this stage, the *Doshas* became stagnant in their places, instead of free circulation. The person develops an aversion against the *Dosha Sanchaya Karanas* and develops desires towards the *Sanchaya Viparita gunas*⁴. In modern science, we can say this first stage of vitiation of *Doshas* is Homeostatic imbalance.

DISCUSSION

In the stage of *Sanchaya* (1) If *Vata Sanchaya* is there, it leads to *Stabdha Koshthata*- hypoperistalsis of the intestine and *Purna Koshthata* - a feeling of accumulation of materials inside the alimentary tract. (2) In *Pitta Sanchaya - Pittavabhasata*- the appearance of mild yellowish discoloration over the skin, *Mandoshmata*- less digestive power. (3) In *Kapha Sanchaya - Anga gaurava*- the feeling of heaviness to the limbs of the body, *Alasya*- laziness⁵.

In this stage, accumulation slowly grows, and when they occupy the entire volume of their designated locations and start showing abnormal functions. When they still continue to increase, they tend to deviate from maintaining health. The body tries to get over this mild abnormality of its own accord resorting to two defensive mechanisms like *Chaya-karane-Vidwesa* (developing hatredness towards the causes of the increase of *Doshas*) and *Viparita gun-iccha* (desire towards the things and qualities of opposite of those of the causes of increase). These two manifest in the form of instincts of the body and help the person to avoid the existing causes and indulge in things of opposite nature⁶. Then the second stage is *Prakopa* which includes both *Kshaya* and *Vruddhi* and is to be denoted as *Vikruta avastha* of *Dosha*. Adverse circumstances still continue to vitiate *Dosha*. Subsequent *Guna*

vridhhi of *Dosha* due to continued *Nidana* hampers the *Chakravata* (continuous) movement, resulting in *Prasara*. In all contexts of *Prasara*, *Vyana vata* plays a vital role. They in the vitiated state do circulate in the whole body. In this state, they are able to generate toxic biochemical compounds harmful to the body. If body resistance is low in any organ, these vitiated *doshas* become successful in generating such harmful biochemical compounds. This stage is *Sthana samshraya*. This is the true origin of disease. So *Sthana samshraya* occurs at the site where circulating *Dosha* stops due to *Khavaigunya* (empty space), thereby manifesting diseases. From *Sthanasamshraya* pathogenesis begins. After this stage symptoms related to vitiated *Dosha* become obvious in any particular system or organ. This is *Vyakti* of disease. This is a confirmatory diagnosis of any disease. After this, if the disease is left untreated it becomes untreatable in due course and may lead to complications. This last stage is *Bheda*⁷. The importance of these *Kriyakala* is that the earlier the diagnosis the earlier the treatment. If the diseases progress to further stages, then it will be difficult to treat⁸. This *Shad Kriyakala* is known as *Vyadhi Kriyakala* or pathological stages.

Charak and *Vagbhat* explained *Ritu Kriyakala* or physiological stages; these are only three i.e., *Chaya*, *Kopa*, and *Prashama*. They mentioned that the equilibrium of the *Doshas* is very unstable and undergoing change constantly every time and every day. These daily changes are happening in particular *Ritu*. As the cyclical changes in the *Ritu* go on naturally, so the cyclical changes in the *Doshas* are also natural events. These changes of the *Doshas* do not produce severe distress to the body and do not require any drastic remedial measures because the degree of these changes is very mild in nature, the body has the capacity to be accustomed to the natural seasonal conditions occurring year after year and these abnormalities will automatically come back to its normal position⁹. So, we can say that the imbalance in the state of bodily tissues is known as 'Disease', and equilibrium is called 'Health'.

According to modern science, these natural changes of equilibrium of *Doshas* or *Ritu kriyakal* are known as

'Homeostasis'. The term homeostasis is used by physiologists to mean maintenance of static or constant conditions in the internal environment. Essentially all of the organs and tissue of the body perform functions that help to maintain these constant conditions. For instance, the lungs provide oxygen to the extracellular fluid to continually replenish the oxygen that is being used by the cells, the kidneys maintain constant ion concentration, and the gastrointestinal system provides nutrients¹⁰. The homeostatic system includes three components. The first one is the sensor; sensors recognize the deviation in any activity in the internal environment and transmit the message to the control center. The second is the control center, the control center receives the message from receptors and immediately sends commands to concerned effectors. Third is effectors, effectors receive the commands from the center and either accelerate or inhibit the activity so that normalcy is restored. Homeostatic mechanisms in the body are responsible for maintaining the normalcy of various body systems. Whenever there is any change in the behavioral pattern of any system, the effectors bring back the normalcy either by inhibiting and reversing the change or by supporting and accelerating the change depending upon the requirement of the situation. This is achieved by means of feedback signals or control systems¹¹. Homeostasis can be maintained only if some reciprocal mechanisms exist. For example, baroreceptor stimulation resulting from increased arterial blood pressure brings about a fall in blood pressure through different compensatory mechanisms involving the nervous system and endocrine system. Similarly, insulin and glucagon have diametrically opposite biochemical effects on the maintenance of blood glucose levels¹².

If any conditions where the homeostasis is disrupted, this condition is called Homeostasis imbalance. Disruptions are any occurrences that affect a person's health from normal conditions. Homeostatic imbalance is a fluctuation in the ability to maintain equilibrium and a constant environment within the body. For example, if a person is having a homeostatic imbalance they may not sweat properly. This would

cause them to overheat which can lead to hyperthermia and heat stroke. As stated, homeostasis is critical to keeping the body regulated and can lead to disorders or even death if not maintained. For instance, heart failure may occur when negative feedback mechanisms become overwhelmed and destructive positive feedback mechanisms take over. Most diseases involve conflicts in homeostasis. For example, as the organism ages, the efficiency in the control of systems becomes reduced due to the loss of receptors. The inefficiencies gradually result in an unstable internal environment that increases the risk of illness, leading to the physical changes associated with aging¹³. Certain homeostatic imbalances, such as a high core body temperature, a high concentration of salt in the blood, or a low concentration of oxygen, can generate homeostatic reactions such as warmth, thirst, or breathlessness, which motivate behavior aimed at restoring homeostasis. The inability of the body to maintain homeostasis leads to pathogenesis and if not treated at the proper time can lead to a disease or even death¹⁴.

CONCLUSION

In *Ayurveda* progression of any disease is explained in six stages i.e., *Shat Kriya Kala*. *Dosha* is considered the biological entity of the body on which the health or illness of an individual depends. In the present scenario food habits, food contents, and lifestyle of society have drastically changed and day by day still changing very rapidly. An unwholesome diet or improper lifestyle causes disturbance in the normalcy of the *Doshas* first and then pathogenesis starts involving the *Dhatu* and *Malas*. By proper history taking of any disease, we can correlate disturbance in homeostasis with *Sanchaya avastha* of *Shat Kriyakala*. This Property is due to the change in both the internal and external environment of the living beings. The internal environmental changes are due to the irregularities in daily and seasonal lifestyles, which are not helping to health and cause vitiation of *Doshas*. The body tries to get over mild abnormalities of its own accord in the form of instincts of the body. The person who is intelligent, conscious about his/her

health, and desirous of avoiding disease can recognize these instincts, act accordingly and help the *Doshas* to revert back to their normal state or condition. If on the other hand, the person is careless, fails to recognize these instincts, and continues to indulge in the causes of increase, he will surely get into the next stage of abnormality. When the *Dosha Prakopa* gets started it contains one pathological circle till *Vikara Avastha*. By proper understanding of *Doshagati* and *Kriyakala*, one can diagnose any disease in its early stage, and it will be helpful for its further treatment. Modern diagnostic tools have equipped the doctor to identify any disease and treat it in the *Sthana Samshraya* stage only whereas *Ayurveda* emphasizes maintaining homeostasis by taking proper measures in the initial stages of *Shat Kriyakala*.

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