

## THE CONCEPT OF PRAGYAPARADH WITH RESPECT TO THE FACTORS THAT CAUSE LIFE-STYLE DISORDERS

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### ABSTRACT

The disorders that are created by man's own imprudence and indulgence in wrong lifestyle (ahar-vihar) are called as Life-style disorders (LDs) or Non-communicable diseases (NCDs). No other organisms are responsible for these disorders other than man himself and his wrong conduct. Why man is tempted to do what is not beneficial for his health? This can be answered in one word that *Ayurveda* calls *Pragyaparadh* (volitional transgression). The body craves pleasure and so all the wrong things, which the mind knows better but cannot resist due to intellectual error, rationalize the cravings and gives way. That weak moment invites trouble. This can be prevented by making the mind totally in control of oneself. There are various ways described in *Ayurveda* to achieve this control over mind. This paper presents study and comparison of *pragyaparadh* (volitional transgression or intellectual error) to the causes that are responsible for various lifestyle disorders.

**Keywords:** *pragyaparadh, dhi, dhriti, smriti, satva, raja, tama, ahar, vihar*

### INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* believes that right *aahar* and right *vihar* are epitome of health. It had laid down certain rules to lead a truly happy and healthy life. Any divergence from these rules gives rise to many disorders. The divergence occurs due to *pragyaparadh*. *Pragyaparadh* vitiates all the *doshas* and leads to various disorders. Modifiable behavioural factors lead to lifestyle disorders. These factors can be totally modified and lifestyle disorders prevented. *Pragyaparadh* according to *Ayurveda* is totally preventable by increasing *satva guna* of mind and restricting *raja* and *tamo guna*.

#### Aim and Objectives:

1. To explain the concept of *pragyaparadh*
2. To compare the *pragyaparadh* described by Charak to the causative factors of lifestyle disorders.

#### Materials and Methods:

*<sup>1</sup>Dhidhrutismrutivibrashtta karma yaturute ashubham/ Pradnyapradha tam vidyaat sarva doshprakopanam. Charak. sharirasthan.1/102*

#### Definition of *Pragyaparadh*:

Deranged intellect (*Dhivibrashtta*), deranged restraint (*Dhritivibrashtta*), and deranged memory (*Smrutivibrashtta*) leads to all sorts of unwholesome actions (*Ashubh karma*). Due to this various defects appear; ill health and sorrow ensues. This is called as intellectual error *pragyaparadh*<sup>1</sup>.

The word *Pragyaparadh* is made from two words *pradnya+aparadh*. *Pragya=Buddhi+ Dhriti+Smriti*, and *aparadh* means misdemeanour. When the intellect (*budhhi*), restraint (*dhriti*), and memory (*smriti*) do not carry out their respective functions properly due to their derangement it causes occurrence of improper actions (*ashubh karma*). These improper actions cause vitiation

of all *doshas*. And imbalance of *doshas* is one of the major causes of illness. What is the cause of this derangement? This is caused due to the covering of *rajas* and *tamas* over the mind<sup>2</sup>. These are the two qualities of mind that need to be kept dormant. *Satva*, another quality of mind keeps intellect pure and free from delinquency. The Intellect, the Restraint and the Memory are the three important attributes that keep mental equilibrium right. The capacity of **intellect** (*budhhi or dhi*) is to preserve knowledge, rational thinking and ability to take decisions. Nature of intellect is righteousness. It sees things rightly. The main function of *buddhi* is firmness, contentment and resolution. It also collects past experiences and memories. The intellect possesses the qualities (*guna*) of *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Among the three qualities only *Sattva guna* is essential for the correct interpretation of knowledge. If *rajas* and *tamas guna* cloud the intellect, interpretation of knowledge becomes wrong and person begins to deviate from right path.

**Restraint** (*Dhruti*): The self-control or will power (*Dhruti*) is required to act according to the decisions taken by the intellect. Function of restraint is to control the mind. Derangement of restraint (*Dhrutivibrashhta*) makes it impossible to control the mind from indulging into sensual pleasures from unwholesome objects.

**Memory** (*Smruti*): The memory is the deposit of events to be recalled. The capacity of the intellect to recollect promptly the decisions taken by intellect and to behave without interruption according to courage is memory. Memory is defined as recollection of the seen, heard and experienced things. When the reminiscence of the knowledge of reality is impaired; it is called as the derangement of memory (*Smrutivibrashhta*).

#### Lifestyle disorders:

The way a person lives is called as 'lifestyle'. The modern health system recognises some disorders related to flawed lifestyle. These disorders are called as lifestyle disorders (LD) or non-communicable diseases (NCD). They are also called as the diseases of civilization. Some of the common lifestyle disorders are as follows<sup>3</sup>:

**Table 1: Lifestyle disorders**

Hypertension	Allergy
Heart diseases	Anxiety and Depression
Hyperlipidemia	Cancer
Insomnia	Constipation
Irritable bowel syndrome	Obesity

#### Causes:

The causes of lifestyle disorders can be divided into two main categories:

1. Modifiable behavioural risk factors,
2. Non-modifiable risk factors and

#### Modifiable behavioural risk factors:

1. **Wrong food habits:** Eating when not hungry, over-eating, eating at odd hours, eating unhealthy food and skipping food. Excessive use of sodium in the diet causes 4.1 million deaths per year as per the WHO report<sup>4</sup>.
2. **Addiction:** Alcoholism, smoking and tobacco. According to the WHO, the mortality rate due to the use of tobacco is more than 7 million per year and alcohol consumption leads to around 1.65 million deaths<sup>5</sup>.
3. **Wrong physical activity:** Sitting for long hours, wrong body posture and remaining indoors. The modern occupational settings (desk jobs) and the stress related to work is a strong risk factor for LDs. A simple lack of physical activity has been claiming 1.6 million lives annually<sup>6</sup>.
4. **Disturbed biological clock:** Sleeping late, waking up late, not sleeping, and oversleeping. Disturbed biological clock increases the likelihood of LDs.

#### Non-modifiable risk factors:

Risk factors that cannot be controlled or modified by intervention are called non-modifiable risk factors. These are age, race, gender and genetics.

#### Comparison of Pragyaparadh and factors causing LDs:

It is interesting to note that the aforesaid causes of the lifestyle disorders are similar to the *Pragyaparadh* mentioned in Charak Samhita some thousands of year's ago<sup>7</sup>.

**Table 2: Comparison of Pragyaparadh and factors causing LDs**

No.	Pradnyaparadh as mentioned in Charak Samhita	Factors that cause lifestyle disorders
1.	Forceful propulsion of natural urges or their suppression	Wrong bowel habits
2.	Indulgence in excessive physical labour and sex.	
3.	Excessive or delayed or wrong actions	Lack of physical activities (sedentary life), or over-exertion.
4.	Repeating non-beneficial things knowingly.	Addiction-Smoking, alcohol, drug, excessive use of chemicals

		(internally or externally), artificial flavours, taste enhancers, preservatives, sugar, artificial sweeteners, fast food, soft drinks, etc.
5.	Movement in wrong place and time.	Lack of sleep, inadequate sleep or rest, sleeping at odd hours, waking up late, sitting for long hours in front of computer, excess use of mobile <sup>8</sup> , over-exertion of eyes and mind.
6.	Avoidance of <i>sadvritta</i> the code of noble conduct. Increase in <i>rajasic</i> and <i>tamasic</i> qualities like unhealthy competition, greed, jealousy, egotism, cowardice, hot temper, confusion, craze, complexes, etc.	Diminishing ethics.
7.	Friendship with the wicked.	
8.	Misbehaviour, rebuking the respected ones.	

## DISCUSSION

*Pragyaparadh* leads to wrongful actions and wrongful actions lead to diseases. Wrongful actions are erupted from wrongful thinking. Wrongful thinking erupts from the mind that is not pure and clear. When the mind is adulterated by *rajas* and *tamas guna* it cannot learn clearly, think clearly and decide clearly. Psychologists opine that man has a tendency to be attracted towards the 'wrong'. Wishing to do what one is not supposed to do is called as 'Temptation'. This is nothing but '*pragyaparadh*'. Though getting tempted is quite normal, one should have enough courage and determination for not falling prey to temptation. For this, one must have total control over his mind, senses and desires.

Why one makes wrong choices despite knowing the fact that it is harmful? It is because of *pragyaparadh*. When the *satva* quality of intellect recedes and *rajas* and *tamas* qualities augment, the intellect becomes deranged and tends to make wrong interpretations of knowledge.

How do we remove these impurities? The impurities of mind can be gradually removed by providing the mind with wholesome food and wholesome thoughts, and by changing about the constitution of mind so that *satva* predominates over the other two *gunas*. Favourable time, sense objects which are agreeable to the mind, virtuous activities which bestow happiness, control of mind and clear intellect, all these are ideal for promotion of health and accomplishment of happiness.

## CONCLUSION

Lifestyle-related diseases are on the rise in our country. These lifestyle diseases are the outcome of unhealthy choices and can be prevented by modifying lifestyle. Unhealthy or wrong choices regarding food, sleep, rest, addiction and moral conduct are the outcome of *Pragyaparadh*. Deranged intellect (*Dhivibrashtta*), deranged re-

strain (*Dhruvibrashtta*), and deranged memory (*Smrutivibrashtta*) leads to all sorts of unwholesome actions (*Ashubh karma*). By understanding this and identifying the causes, lifestyle can be modified. Modification of the life style is the only way to prevent LDs.

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