

## **A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF DEHA PRAKRITI AND ITS ROLE IN PREVENTION OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Prakriti* is a fundamental and unique concept of *Ayurveda*. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, whichever *dosha* is predominant at the time of conception that will be the *prakriti* of future child. Thus, *dosha* plays the most important role in formation of *prakriti* of the individual. *Prakriti* covers the physical, social, mental and spiritual characteristics of life. In *Ayurveda*, the sole responsible cause of any disease is vitiation of *doshas*. Thus, *doshas* are responsible for both, formation of *prakriti* as well as for diseases. The goal of *Ayurveda* is to maintain the health of an individual and to treat the diseases. To achieve this goal, the *doshas* should be in balanced status. But the common life style and dietary habits cannot be applied to every individual as everyone is born with his own *prakriti*.

**Keywords:** *Prakriti, dosha, Sushruta*

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Prakriti* means *swabhav* or nature. It is an important and unique concept of *Ayurveda*. According to this, every individual is different from other. Their size and shapes are different, even physiological and psychological characters are also different. The *Deha prakriti* is essentially genetically determined and likely to be influenced by a variety of environmental factors to some extent.

Present time is an era of non-communicable diseases. Non-communicable diseases such as autoimmune diseases, heart diseases, stroke, cancers, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, osteoporosis, cataract, chronic obstructive

pulmonary disease etc. are rising at an alarming level. They are the leading cause of death globally. There are so many drugs available in modern sciences for treatment of these diseases but all comes with serious and long term side effects. So, this is better to prevent these diseases by alternative methods.

Change in life-style and environment is the main cause of these non-communicable diseases. These diseases can be prevented by switching to healthy diet and life style. But according to *Ayurveda*, a common life style and diet pattern cannot be applied to every individual as everyone possesses his own *prakriti*.

Preponderance of any one, two or all the three *doshas* at the time of conception determines the characteristic features of the future child as *ek-doshaj prakriti*, *dwandwaja prakriti* or *sam doshaj prakriti*.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Different *Ayurvedic* classical books, research papers and journals were referred to fulfil this part. It comprises subsections having literary part of *prakriti*, assessment of *deha prakriti* and role of *prakriti* in prevention of non-communicable diseases.

## FORMATION OF PRAKRITI

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, formation of *prakriti* takes place at the time of conception. [1]

“शक्रशोणः तसयोगयोभवतदोषोत्कटः  
प्रकृत जायत तेन .....”  
(स.शा.४/६२)

According to this, formation of *Prakriti* takes place during intrauterine life and the type of *Prakriti* is directly related with the amount of *Dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) at the time of conception. Thus, *Doshas* are responsible for *Prakriti* formation.

According to *Acharya Charak*,

“दोषानशतयताह्यषामदहृकतरुच्यत” (च.स.७/४०)

As these *doshas* are present at the time of birth, therefore it is called *deha prakriti*.

## TYPES OF PRAKRITI

In the *Ayurvedic* texts, different types of *prakriti* are described on the basis of *Sharira dosha*, *manas dosha* and *panchmahabhuta*.

The main types of *prakriti* are:

1. *Doshaja prakriti*
2. *Manas prakriti*

### ***Doshaja prakriti*:**

*Doshaja prakriti* is also known as *Deha*

*Prakriti/Sharirika Prakriti*. *Acharya Charaka* has described seven types of *prakriti* in *charaka viman Sthan*. [2] *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagabhata* have also described seven types of *deha prakriti*.

1. *Vatala prakriti*
2. *Pittala prakriti*
3. *Shleshmala prakriti*
4. *Vata-Pittala prakriti*
5. *Vata-Shleshmala prakriti*
6. *Pitta-Shleshmala prakriti*
7. *Sama-prakriti*

*Acharya Charaka* has also described four types of *deha prakriti* in *charaka Sutra sthan*. [3]

*Acharya charaka* has described 6 types of *prakriti* in *charaka indriya sthan* chapter 1. [4]

Same are described as factors influencing the formation of *prakriti* in *Ashtang Sangraha*.

1. *Jatiprasakta*
2. *Kulaprasakta*
3. *Deshanupatini*
4. *Kalanupatini*
5. *Vayonupatini*
6. *Pratyatmaniyata*

## ASSESSMENT OF DEHA PRAKRITI

In a study, *Tripathi Piyush K. et al.* (2016) mentioned the challenges in assessing the *prakriti* of patient. Understanding *prakriti* and its assessment becomes crucial but assessment of *prakriti* has not remained unanimous result most of the times. In *Ayurveda*, diagnostic methods (such as *prakriti* assessment, pulse diagnosis etc.) often relay on some degree of subjective interpretation by physician. Whenever we assess *prakriti* of any patient, we gen-

erally use *prakriti* assessment proforma/questionnaire. We find too many questionnaires for assessing *prakriti* but no questionnaire is exactly similar to another of its kind. [5]

*Acharyas* has described various physical, physiological and psychological features of

**Table 1:** Physical features

Sr.No.	Character	Vataja	Pittaja	Kaphaja
1.	Body Built	<i>Apachita</i> (emaciated), <i>Ruksha</i> (dry), <i>Alpa</i> (dwarf), <i>Alpang</i> , <i>Stabdha</i> (Firmly fixed)	<i>Sukumar</i> (tender), <i>Avdatgatra</i> (clear), <i>Shithilang</i> (weak)	<i>Snigdhangha</i> , <i>Samhat</i> , <i>Shal-</i> <i>lakshan</i> , <i>Parip-</i> <i>urna</i> , <i>Sarvang</i>
2.	General Appearance	<i>Durbhaga</i> (ugly)	<i>Durbhag</i> (Ugly)	<i>Subhaga</i>
3.	Look	<i>Chal drishti</i>	.....	<i>Prasanna darshan</i>
4.	Colour of body	<i>Dhusara</i> (grey)	<i>Gaur</i> (fair), <i>Tamara</i>	<i>Gaur</i> (fair)
5.	Strength	<i>Alpa bala</i>	<i>Madhayam bala</i>	<i>Balwana</i>
6.	Gait	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>Chapala</i>	.....	<i>Avasthit gati</i>
7.	Skin	<i>Parush</i> (dry), <i>Sphutita</i> (cracked)	<i>Prabhut piplu</i> , <i>Vyanga</i> , <i>Til</i> , <i>pidika</i>	<i>Saumya</i> (clean), <i>Achchha</i> (clear)
8.	Voice & Speech	<i>Pratat ruksha</i> (hoarse), <i>Ksham</i> (dry), <i>Sann</i> (low), <i>Sakta</i> , <i>Jarjar</i> , <i>Bahubhashi</i>	<i>Vigrah vakta</i> (hostile discussion)	<i>Abhiyogvan</i> , <i>Parinishchitvak</i> , <i>Prasann svara</i>
9.	Sweating	<i>Alpa sveda</i>	<i>Prabuta</i>	<i>Alpa sveda</i>
10.	Hair	<i>Ruksha</i> , <i>Alpa</i> , <i>Sphutita</i> , <i>Dhusara</i>	<i>Kapil</i> , <i>Mridu</i> , <i>Alpa</i> , <i>Kshipra pal-</i> <i>itya</i> ,	<i>Sthira</i> , <i>Kutil</i> , <i>Ghana</i> , <i>Neel</i>
11.	Forehead	.....	.....	<i>Maha-lalata</i>
12.	Eyebrows	<i>Chala</i> (mobile), <i>Anavasthita</i>	.....	<i>Avasthita</i>
13.	Eyelashes	<i>Chala</i> , <i>Anavasthita</i>	<i>Pingal</i> , <i>Alpa</i> , <i>chala</i>	<i>Vishal Pakshma</i>
14.	Eyes	<i>Khar</i> , <i>Dhusara</i> , <i>Vritta</i>	<i>Tamra</i> , <i>Vritta</i> , <i>Himpriya</i> , <i>Netra-</i> <i>raag</i>	<i>Susnigadha</i> , <i>Vishal</i> , <i>Raktanta</i> , <i>Suvyakta</i>
15.	Lips	<i>Anavasthita</i>	<i>Tamra</i>	<i>Upachita</i> , <i>Paripurna</i>
16.	Teeth	<i>Alpa</i> , <i>Parush</i> , <i>antkhadi</i>	.....	<i>Bahula</i>
17.	Tongue	<i>Anavasthita</i> (unstable)	<i>Tamra</i>	.....

different kinds of *prakriti*. Here is an attempt to compile these features. But it needs deep knowledge to explore the actual meaning of words written in classical texts. A continuous and consistent effort is required to do that.

18.	Palate	<i>Sphutita</i> (cracked)	.....	.....
19.	Chin	<i>Anavasthita</i> (mobile)	<i>Tamra</i>	<i>Upachita, paripurna</i>
20.	Face	<i>Parusha</i> (dry)	<i>Tamra,</i>	.....
21.	Limbs	<i>Sphutita</i> (cracked)	<i>Gaur, Ushna</i>	<i>Maha-lalat-uro</i>
22.	Nails	<i>Parush, Alpa</i>	.....	<i>Suvibhakta</i>
23.	Hands	<i>Parush</i> (dry), <i>Anavasthita, Sphutita</i> (cracked)	<i>Tamra, Gaur</i> (fair), <i>Parusha</i> (dry)	<i>Snigadha</i> (oily), <i>saumya</i> (clean), <i>Suvibhakta</i>
24.	Feet	<i>Parush</i> (dry), <i>Anavsthita, Sphutita</i> (cracked)	<i>Tamra, Gaur</i> (fair), <i>Parusha</i> (dry)	<i>Snigadha</i> (oily), <i>Saumya</i> (clean), <i>Suvibhakta</i>
25.	Body odour	.....	<i>Prabhuta pooti</i>	.....
26.	Joints	<i>Chal, Anavasthita,</i> <i>Satata sandhi shabda</i> <i>gamini</i>	<i>Mridu sandhi</i> (loose& soft joints)	<i>Goodha,</i> <i>Snidha,</i> <i>Sushlishta</i>
27.	Sira, kandara, dhamani	<i>Bahu kandara, Bahu</i> <i>sira pratan, Bahu- dhamani</i>	.....	.....

**Table 2:** Physiological and Psychological features:

Sr.No.	Character	<i>Vataja</i>	<i>Pittaja</i>	<i>Kaphaja</i>
1.	Appetite	<i>Laghu Bahubhuk</i>	<i>Tikshan kshudha,</i> <i>Dandshuka</i>	<i>Alpa kshudha,</i> <i>Ashanpriye</i>
2.	Thirst	.....	<i>Tikshan trisna</i>	<i>Alpa</i>
3.	Digestive power	<i>Alpa</i>	<i>Sheeghra-paki</i>	.....
4.	Economic Status	<i>Alpa dhan (poor)</i>	<i>Madhya</i>	<i>Vasumanto</i>
5.	Dreams	<i>Aakash-chari</i>	<i>Svapne vidyuta, ulka</i> <i>pasyet</i>	<i>Jalashaya aloki,</i>
6.	Fertility	<i>Alpa apatya</i>	<i>Alpa apatya</i>	<i>Prabhut apatya</i>
7.	Religious Faith	<i>Nastika</i>	.....	<i>Dridh-bhakti</i> <i>parayan</i>
8.	Likings	<i>Madhur amla la-</i> <i>vana</i> <i>snigadha aahara,</i> <i>Yatra, Geet, hasya</i>	<i>Madhur Kashaya</i> <i>tikta, Sheeta, Malya- vilepana</i>	<i>Malya-</i> <i>anulapena, katu</i> <i>tikta kashaya,</i> <i>Ushna</i>
9.	Initiative	<i>Sheeghra</i> <i>arambha</i>	.....	<i>Deerghsutri</i>
10.	Knowledge	<i>Anavasthit mati</i>	<i>Madhya gyanvigyan</i>	<i>Vidyavanta</i>
11.	Sexual desire	.....	<i>Alpa –Vyavaaya</i>	<i>Prabhut,</i> <i>Atimathun</i>
12.	Bowel movement	.....	<i>Prabhut-srisht</i>	.....
13.	Bladder	.....	<i>Prabhut-srisht</i>	.....

	movement			
14.	Respect of Teachers	.....	.....	Manyita gurunam
15.	Relation with friends	Chala – souhard	.....	Sthir-mitra
16.	Courage	.....	.....	Maha utsaho
17.	Helping Attitude	.....	Ashrit vatsal (child loving)	.....
18.	Tolerance	.....	Klesh asahishanave	.....
19.	Faith in texts	.....	.....	Dridh
20.	Gratitude	Kritghna	.....	Kritagya
21.	Sleep	Jagruk, Alpa-nidra, Krathati (snoring), Supta stratayate	.....	Nidralu
22.	Response to Hot & Cold	Sheeta dveshi	Sheetal priya	Alpa santap dosha
23.	Nature & behaviour	Sheeghra kshobha, Sheeghra trasa raag, Stena (thief)	Ashrita vastsala, Abhimani	Shanta
24.	Memory	Alpa (short), Sheeghra shruta grahi, Chala	.....	Smritimaan
25.	Jealousy	Matsarya (jealous)	Irshyalu	Vineeta
26.	Anger	Krodhi	Kshipra kopa - kshipra prasad,	Alpa kroadh, Shaant
27.	Truthfulness	.....	.....	Satyavadi
28.	Intellect	Chala, avyavasthita	Medhavi	Gambhir buddhi
29.	Greed	Lolupa	.....	Alolupa
30.	Self-control	Ajitendriya, Heensatva	.....	.....
31.	Dignity	.....	.....	Sulajja

### IMPORTANCE OF PRAKRITI IN PREVENTION OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Prakriti is the fundamental concept of our ancient Chikitsa paddhati and Doshas are responsible for Prakriti nirman. As the same

doshas, in disequilibrium states are responsible for diseases therefore knowledge about Prakriti is prerequisite for assessment of Vikriti (pathology).

According to Tridosha siddhanta of Ayurveda; vata, pitta and kapha are 3 sharirika

*dosha*. These *doshas* are responsible for health and ill-health of any individual. Each part of the body comes under the influence of all the three *doshas*. But there are predominant areas of each *dosha*. *Kapha* occupies the upper part of body [6] (i.e. sinus, nostril, throat, bronchi, lungs etc.). That's why *kapha prakriti purusha* are more prone to diseases of upper parts of the body e.g. respiratory ailments, mucous congestion, allergies etc. than the persons of different *prakriti* types. *Pitta* occupies the middle parts of the body (i.e. stomach, liver, spleen, gall bladder, pancreas, duodenum etc.). So, the *pitta prakriti purush* are more prone to diseases of its respective parts e.g. peptic ulcer, gastritis, agitation etc. *Vata* occupies the lower parts of the (lower part of small intestine, large intestine, pelvic area etc.), so the *vata prakriti purush* are more prone to disorders of lower parts of the body e.g. constipation, low back-ache etc.

By knowing the *prakriti* of any individual, we can make an idea about the diseases, that individual is more prone to and can make effort to prevent them. *Acharya charaka* has also described the therapeutical measures according to *prakriti*. [7]

According to *Acharya Charaka*, *vata prakriti purusha* are more prone to *vataja vikara*. Similarly, *Kaphaja prakriti purush* and *Pittaja prakriti purush* are more prone to *Kaphaja vikara* and *Pittaja vikara* respectively. [8] So, food, drink, exercise etc. should be advised in accordance to *prakriti* for maintaining health. This results in healthy tissues and homeostasis of *doshas*.

*Vata Prakriti purush* usually have *Vishamagni*, *Pittaja Prakriti purush* has *tikshanagni* and *Kaphaja prakriti purush* have

*Mandagni*. [9] So, diet should be advised by considering one's digestion power.

*Kapha prakriti purush* are supposed to be *balwana* while the *vata prakriti purush* are supposed to have *alpa bala*. The *pitta prakriti purush* have *madhyam bala*. Drug doses should be given accordingly.

*Vata prakriti purush* has *krur koshtha*; they are more prone to constipation and need strong purgatives. *Pitta prakriti purush* has *Mridu koshtha*; they need very mild laxatives to relieve constipation while the *kapha prakriti purush* has normal *koshtha*.

Thus, *Prakriti* will help clinician in the following aspects.

1. Early prediction of disease susceptibility.
2. Prevention of possible diseases.
3. Successful prognostication in disease state.
4. Selection of appropriate and specific treatment for a given disease.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

*Prakriti* has prime importance in both healthy and diseased persons. The root cause of non-communicable diseases is faulty life style and imbalanced diet. The *prakriti* of a person provides physical, psychological, immunological knowledge of that person and also indicates the physiological strengths and weaknesses, even the susceptibility of that individual to various diseases. So, knowledge of *Prakriti* should be utilized in diagnosis, treatment and maintenance of health. If using the concept of *prakriti*, various non-communicable diseases can be treated or prevented more efficiently.

*Prakriti* is important for prescribing dietary regimen and for life style management in healthy individuals and for treatment in diseased individuals. The different diseases to



which an individual is predisposed may be prevented or postponed by correct herbs, diet and other regimen including *yoga* and *asana*. Along with planning diet and life style according to individual's *prakriti*, *swasthavritta*, *sadvritta*, *dincharya*, *ritucharya* can also be used as preventive measures.

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