

ENLIGHTEN THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT OF PRAKRITI FOR MAINTAINS OF HEALTH AS PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE ASPECT – A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient Holistic science that aims to prevent and cure diseases. *Tridosha* is the basic functional unit of our body. The status of this *Tridosha* in an individual is constant from birth to the time of death, known as *Prakriti*. Every individual has unique characteristics known as *Prakriti*, which are formed by the predominance of *Dosha*. *Prakriti* is defined as the State of an individual in its natural form. *Acharya Charaka* includes *Prakriti* in *Dasha Vidha Atur Pariksha*. Maintenance of health, prevention and cure of diseases for longevity depends on this fundamental theory of *Prakriti*, which means understanding individuality. So, assessment and understanding *Prakriti* is the best guideline for a healthy life.

Keywords: *Prakriti*, Assessment Importance.

INTRODUCTION

Dosha, Dhātu and Mala are three essential constituents' human body¹. *Tridosha*, in its state of equilibrium, is responsible for normal functions of the body², thereby maintaining a normal healthy state. *Dosha* are body elements that can vitiate other elements but also can design or construct *Prakriti*³. *Prakriti* is the state or proportion of *Dosha*, which is constant and stable in the body from conception to death⁴. The proportion of *Dosha* in the *Shukra* and *Artava* at conception decides the *Prakriti* of the foetus. *Prakriti* is an expression of one's constitution or *Swabhava*⁵. Every individual has unique structural, functional, and emotional characteristics that differ from those of others, depending on *Prakriti*. So, the maintenance of the health of individuals, both preventive and curative, depends upon this fundamental theory of *Prakriti*. *Charaka* includes this *Prakriti* assessment in *Dasha Vidha Atur Pariksha*⁶. *Ayurveda* has described *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya* as maintaining the normal functioning of *Dosha* related to specific *Prakriti*. So, the evaluation of *Prakriti* provides guidelines for preserving health in a personalised manner. Hence, in the present work, an attempt has been made to enlighten the importance of the evaluation of *Prakriti*.

CONCEPT OF PRAKRITI

According to *Ayurveda*, every individual is unique. They are different in size and shape and have different physiological and even psychological characteristics. This is because every person has *Tridosha* and *Triguna* in various proportions. *Prakriti* types depend upon the predominance of these factors: *Doshaja Prakriti*, *Manasa Prakriti*, *Bhautika Prakriti*, and *Jatyadi Prakriti*.

However, depending upon the predominance of *Tridosha* in the *Shukra* and *Artava* at the time of conception decides the *Prakriti* of the individual⁷. The predominance of anyone, two, or all three *Dosha* determines the *Doshaja Prakriti* of that individual⁸. *Doshaja Prakriti* is nothing but *Dehaprakriti*. *Tridosha* is the basic functional unit of our body; *Dosha Anushaya* means close connection or attachment. Due to the non-partisan bond qualities of

Dosha expressed on the body, this is called *Dehaprakriti*⁹.

Acharya Charaka mentioned additional factors that determine *Prakriti*, such as the Nature of the season, the Condition of the Uterus, the food the mother eats during pregnancy, other regimes the mother follows during pregnancy, and *Mahabhuta Vikara*¹⁰. These factors are affiliated with one or more *Doshas*, which are dominantly associated with the above mentioned factors. So, *Prakriti* is defined as the state of an individual in its natural form depending on the predominance of *Dosha*. These *Tridoshaja* Predominance impacts the structure, functional and psychological nature, and individuals. Hence, that's why knowledge regarding the *Prakriti* of a person is of vital importance for the fulfilment of *Ayurveda*'s aim as a preventive and curative aspect for a healthy life. That is precisely why the assessment of *Prakriti* is such an essential point in examining individuals for the proper guidelines for promoting health and longevity of life.

IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT OF PRAKRITI

• In Respect to Healthy Lifestyle for the Being of Health

In *Ayurveda*, *Dinacharya* (Diurnal regime) and *Ritucharya* (Seasonal regime) are prescribed according to the biorhythm of *Dosha*. They are the simplest, easily executable, and preventive measures.

People can adopt these regimes as a healthy lifestyle according to their own *Prakriti* to keep their bodies healthy and maintain their *Dosha* equilibrium for normal body functions.

So, for health maintenance, knowledge of individuals' *Prakriti* is the best guideline for a healthy life. Improper *Aahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (other daily routine) causative factors of diseases by determining the *Prakriti* of every individual, health can be maintained by advocating proper *Aahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (behaviour and physical activity). Each individual requires opposite quality (*Guna*) *Aahara* and *Vihara* to their own *Prakriti* to maintain health¹¹. For example, a person of *Vata Prakriti* involves food that is oily,

heavy, and requires less exercise; otherwise, there is always a tendency for *Vata* to increase, giving rise to *Vata Vyadhi*. So, it is essential to adapt to a Healthy Lifestyle, as per *Prakriti*, to promote longevity of a healthy life.

- **For Knowledge of Agni-**

Food is the energy source for the restoration of the human body. The external food materials as nutritional sources must be converted so that they are absorbed, reach all parts of the body, and fulfil their energy requirements. Agni brings this conversion by digestion and metabolism process. Agni is a significant entity in our body that is important for healthy physiology. The wellness and illness of an individual depend upon the proper and improper functions of Agni. Acharya Charaka has described four types of Agni according to one's own *Prakriti* as¹²- *Vishama Agni* in *Vata Prakriti*. *Tikshana Agni* in *Pitta Prakriti*. *Manda Agni* in *Kapha Prakriti*. *Sama Agni* in *Sama Doshaja Prakriti*. According to *Prakriti*, the Agni type *Agnibala*, *Kshudha* (hunger), *Aahar Matra* (quantity of food), and *Jaranshakti* (digestive capacity and nature) are different for every individual. So, *Prakriti* estimation plays a prime role in assessing Agni exact knowledge for maintaining individuals normal digestive physiology in both preventive and curative aspects.

- **For Knowledge of Koshtha-**

Koshtha is essential for understanding the nature of bowel movements, defecation, and purgation. Due to the predominance of *Dosha*, *Koshtha* is divided into three types: *Krura Koshtha*, *Mridu Koshtha*, and *Madhyam Koshtha*.

As per the *Prakriti* type, *Koshtha* can be decided. According to the Predominance of *Dosha*, *Koshtha* types¹³ are-

In *Vata Prakriti*- *Krura Koshtha*

Pitta Prakriti- *Mridu Koshtha*

Kapha Prakriti- *Madhyam Koshtha*

Sama Doshaja Prakriti- *Madhyam Koshtha*.

Koshtha assessment is essential for both preventive and curative aspects as follows-

- To decide and advise on an appropriate diet plan.

- For knowledge of the excretion and purgation process.

- To decide *Snehan* process before *Shodhan Karma*.

- To decide and make the physician plan for the line of treatment.

- **Determination of Bala (Strength) and Vyadhi-shamatva (Immunity)-**

The comparative strength of different individuals can be decided by the type of *Prakriti*. In the *Kapha Prakriti* individual, more *Dhatusarata*, firmness, stability in body physique and proper growth and development are present. So, *Kapha Prakriti* people have *Uttam Bala*¹⁴, which means they are more potent than *Pitta and Vata Prakriti*. Determination of the *Bala* of a person is essential for preventing disease and treating the person. *Vyadhishamatva* is nothing but the power of the body which prevents the development of disease (*Vyadhi Utapadak Pratibandhakatva*) and also the resist *Bala* (Strength) of disease (*Vyadhi Bala Virodhitva*). *Kapha Prakriti* people having more physical Strength or *Balwant*, so they have more *Vyadhishamatva* (immunity) than *Pitta and Vata Prakriti*.

It is essential to know *Prakriti and Vyadhishamatva* for the maintenance of health.

Among the *Prakriti* types, *Sama Prakriti* (*Tridoshaja*) is *Shreshtha* (best), but it is found rarely. *Dwidoshaja* (Dual) *Prakriti* is *Nindya* or bad. *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata Prakriti* are *Uttam*, *Madhyam* and *Heena*, respectively¹⁵. According to their *Prakriti*, it indicates *Bala* (Body Strength) and *Vyadhishamatva* (Immunity).

- **Nadi Pariksha-** *Nadi Pariksha* is an ancient art and unique diagnostic tool in *Ayurveda*.

In *Prakriti*, due to the predominance of *Dosha*, different *Nadi Gati* (movements like those of animals) are felt during *Parikshana*¹⁶.

As *Vata Dosha* increases, *Nadi Gati* resembles a movement like *Sarpa* (Snake) or *Jalauka* (Leech).

As *Pitta Dosha* increases, *Nadi Gati* resembles movements like *Manduka* (Frog), *Kalinga* (Sparrow), or *Kaka* (Crow).

Kapha Dosha increases -*Nadi Gati* resembles a movement like *Hansa* (Swan) or *Paravata* (Pigeon).

• **Predisposition to Specific Disease/ Prediction of Specific Diseases** *Prakriti* forms from the predominance of a specific *Dosha*. Diseases are formed mainly by the vitiation of *Dosha*. Due to the same quality of the *Ahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (daily routine) of this predominant *Dosha*, each *Prakriti* type is susceptible to specific diseases.

So, *Prakriti* determines the proneness of an individual for *Dosha*-specific diseases¹⁷. For example, *Kapha Prakriti* people are more prone to *Kaphaja Vikara*, such as *Agnimandya*, *Medoroga*, *Prameha*, etc. *Prakriti* knowledge is essential for the prediction of these specific diseases. These diseases can be prevented and treated by appropriate Diet, daily routine regime and medicine as per one's own *Prakriti*.

• **Prognosis of Diseases** If the disease causative *Dosha* is the same as the *Prakriti* of a diseased person, then that disease becomes *Krichasadhya*¹⁸, which is difficult to cure. Similarly, if the vitiated *Dosha* differs from one's *Prakriti*, it is *Sukhasadhya*¹⁹, which means easy to treat. For example - If a *Vataja Prakriti* person suffers from *Vataja Vyadhi*, it isn't easy to cure. It is easy to treat if that person suffers from *Pitta* or *Kaphaja* Disease.

• **Therapeutic Measures for Diseases**

The knowledge of *Prakriti* advocates drawing individualized lines of treatment for the diseased person. *Prakriti* is determines the medicine and dose; for example- a *Pitta Prakriti* person cannot bear the *Ushna Dravya* and heavy doses.

When managing diseases, it is critical to consider both the predominant *Dosha*, which forms *Prakriti*, and the Vitiated *Dosha*.

• **Rasayana and Vajikarana Chikitsa:** The *Rasayana Chikitsa* is valid for promoting health and longevity of life. *Vajikarana Chikitsa* is helpful for good progeny. In *Rasayana and Vajikarana* treatments, the treated person feels rejuvenated, young, healthy, vigorous and comfortable.

According to *Prakriti*, *Rasayana and Vajikarana Dravya* are specific.

• **Panchakarma Chikitsa** *Prakriti* assessment helps decide specific *Karma* from *Panchakarma* therapy to

get more benefits during the prevention and curing of diseases.

• **Arishta Lakshana**

Arishta Lakshana means signs of approaching death of a patient or incurability or bad prognosis of diseases as *Prakriti Lakshana* remains constant throughout life. So, *Prakriti*'s assessment is essential for ruling out the above changes, which means *Arishta Lakshana*.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda states that every individual is unique. *Prakriti* is the uniqueness of every individual in terms of structural, functional, and psychological characteristics. The concept of *Prakriti* plays a vital role in *Ayurveda*'s maintenance of health, prevention of diseases, and treatment of ailments. Assessment and understanding *Prakriti* is the best guideline for a healthy life. It advocates different Lifestyles for each individual as per their *Prakriti* to continue healthy living in a personalised manner. The knowledge of *Prakriti* also gives an idea about physiological features like *Agni*, *Koshtha*, *Bala* (physical strength), and *Vyadhishamatva* (immunity), and it is essential for maintaining the equilibrium of normal functioning as per *Dosha* predominance to promote health.

Assessment of *Prakriti* also provides guidance related to understanding specific disease prediction, prognosis of diseases and selection of drug and their doses as personalised therapeutic measures.

So, maintaining health in both preventive and curative aspects depends on this fundamental theory of individuality, which is the concept of *Prakriti*, for achieving longevity and a healthy life.

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