

ROLE OF *DOSHA* IN MAINTAINING HEALTH: AN *AYURVEDIC* PERSPECTIVE

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Article Received on 03/05/2023

Article Revised on 24/05/2023

Article Accepted on 14/06/2023

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is considered by many Scholars to be the oldest healing therapy of the world. Ayurveda means 'The Science of Life'. *Ayurvedic* knowledge originated in India more than 5,000 years ago and is often called the 'Mother of All Healing'. This healing therapy places great emphasis on preventive techniques and encourages the maintenance of health through close attention to balance in one's life, right thinking, diet, lifestyle and the use of herbs. Knowledge of Ayurveda enables one to understand how to create this balance of body, mind and consciousness according to one's own individual constitution and how to make lifestyle changes to bring about and maintain this balance.^[1] *Doshas* are the vital energies or humour, which control the whole body. The physiology of the human body is governed by three vital energies, which can never be measured in any real sense, but only observed and monitored. According to Ayurveda, everything in existence is made up of five elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space. These five elements are expressed as three *Dosha* types in the human body.^[2] Each person has a unique combination of *Doshas* from birth. They are present in different ratios. For example, some may have a high concentration of *Pitta* (fire) in their constitution, with *Kapha* (earth) secondary and only a small amount of *Vata* (air), but someone else may have a different combination.^[3]

KEYWORDS: - *Dosha*, Health, Ayurveda, *Panchamahabhuta*, *Samyavastha*.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, *Doshas* are the functional entities within the body mind complex. These manifest in the body through their qualities, specific locations, and the active roles they play in coordinating the processes that form and sustain the body. In other words, they are the energies that make things happen in the organism. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are the entire body and thus produce good or bad consequences in the entire body when non-aggravated or aggravated. In the state of normalcy (normal state) good consequences like development, strength, complexion, cheerfulness etc. while in that of abnormality they cause bad consequences known as disorders.^[4]

It is important to note that the word *Dosha* in Sanskrit translates to the English word 'fault', meaning a crash or point of weakness where you might go out of balance.^[5] Ayurveda believes in the equality of microcosm v/s macrocosm and has got faith in the theory that whatever is present. In the external universe is also available in the

human body and an individual is an epitome of the universe, as all the material and metaphysical phenomena of the universe are present in the individual and all those present in the individual are also contained in the universe.^[6]

विसर्गादानविक्षेपैः सोम सूर्यानिना यथा।

धारयन्ति जगद्देहं कफपित्तानिनास्तथा ॥ (S. Su. 21/8)^[7]

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To discover out the relationship between *Ayurvedic Dosha* and Wellbeing.
2. To think about almost the truth that physiological adjust of *Dosha* within the human body.
3. To clarify the components mindful for *Vridhi* and *Kṣaya* of *Doshas*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

An overview of *Ayurvedic* compositions served as the foundation for this article. Materials on *Dosa* and other pertinent subjects have been compiled. The *Charaka*

Samhitha, Susruta Samhitha, Astanga Hriday and extant commentaries on these works were the fundamental *Ayurvedic* compositions utilized in this think approximately. We have in addition insinuated to the diverse websites and consistent journals to accumulate information with regard to current explores on the relevant topics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Dosh:^[8] –

धातवश्च मलाश्चापिदुष्यन्त्येभिर्यतस्ततः ।

वातपित्तकफा एते त्रया दोषा इति स्मृताः ॥

(भावप्रकाश पुर्वखण्ड 3/100)

Dravyas-the constituents of Sarira: - The concept of *Tridoṣha* is not imaginary, it is applied medical aspect of *panchabhutika* theory of Indian philosophies. The three *doṣhas* are definitely *panchabhautika* in their origin and nature having the following pattern of constitutional predominance.

Akash and *vayu mahabhuta* = *Vata doṣha*

Tej mahabhuta = *Pitta doṣha*

Jala and *prithivi mahabhuta* = *Kapha doṣha*

The *bhutas* are *dravya* or matter. The one which is a substratum of the qualities and actions and is a concomitant cause is known as matter.^[9]

Importance of Dosh

धर्मार्थकाम-मोक्षाणामारोग्यं मूलमुत्तमम् ।

रोगास्तस्यापहर्त्तारः श्रेयसो जीवितस्य च ॥ (C. Su. 1/16)^[10]

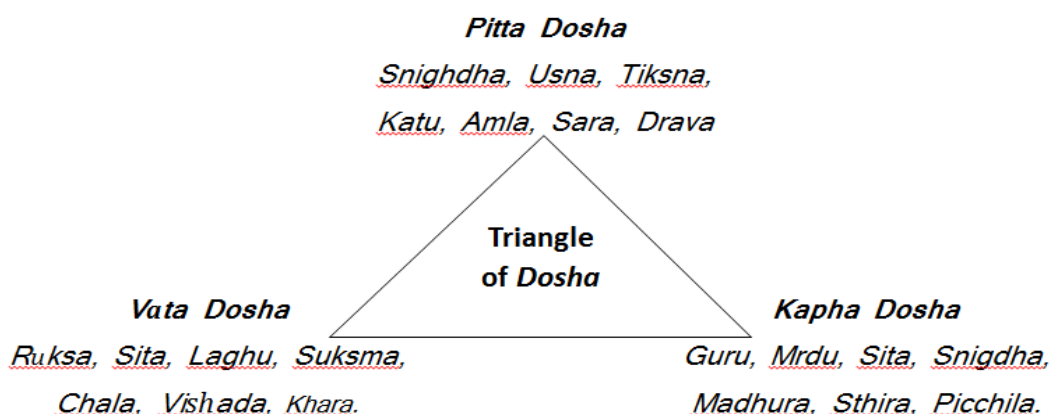
In brief the *Tridoṣhas* viz. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* destroy and sustain the body in their normal and abnormal states. The three *doṣhas* may be understood as the three major groups of all the things as well as activities related to *Sarira* and *Manas*. Those directly concerned with the

development and growth may be put in the *Kapha* group which comes from *Jala* and *Prithivi Mahabhuta*, In the natural state this group (*Shlesma* or *kapha doṣha*) promotes strength in the form of *ojas* and in a morbid condition it takes the form of excreta (*mala*) and causes misery.^[11]

The second group, responsible for metabolism and catabolism in the body, represent the sun or the heat of external world in the body, is known as *pitta*. In nature different vegetables and crops, the process of ripening is performed with the help of the heat provided by sun and the in kitchen the vegetables as well as rice, pulses etc. are cooked with the help of fire. In the same way the process of *Dhatupaka* is performed by varieties of *pitta*.^[12]

Vata doṣha is recognised as *Yogavahi* (medium or mixing agent), responsible for all activities of the body and constitutes the very life of living being. Thus, it is clear that the groups and factors responsible for growth, metabolism and different activities inside the body can be named *kapha*, *pitta* and *vata* respectively.^[13]

The Attributes of dosas: - Twenty dual attributes (*Dwanda Guna*) or properties play a very important role in *Ayurvedic* medicine. Each *doṣha* (i. e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) possess certain physical properties which determine the function of each *doṣha*. These properties some how generally bear opposites action (for example *Vata doṣha* has *Ruksha* (roughness) and *Sita* (coldness) attributes while *Pitta doṣha* possess *Snighdha* (soothingness) and *Ushna* (hotness) qualities, which are contrary to each other) which help in automatic control over their equilibrium, which is the essentiality of the health and treatment. According to *Caraka samhita* the properties of three *doṣhas* are described as below-^[14]



Tridoṣa Brief description^[15]

Main points regarding the three doṣas are being described in this table.

Dosha and main seats	Main attributes	Main function	Five kinds of Dosha	Five specific seats
Vata <i>Pakwashaya</i> or colon (Caraka) <i>Sroni</i> or Low back And rectum Guda (Susruta)	<i>Ruksa</i> (rough) <i>Laghu</i> (light) <i>Shuksma</i> (Subtle) <i>Chala</i> (mobile) <i>Visada</i> (non-slimy) <i>Khara</i> (coarse)	Movements, vibration and impulse	<i>Prana</i> <i>Udana</i> <i>Samana</i> <i>Vyana</i> <i>Apana</i>	Head, chest or pharynx Throat The gut Heart, whole body Excretory organs

Dosha and main seats	Main attributes	Main function	Five kinds of Dosha	Five specific seats
Pitta <i>Amashaya</i> or stomach (Caraka & Kashyapa) <i>Pakwamashaya</i> or Madhya or small gut (Susruta)	<i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous) <i>Tikṣṇa</i> (sharp) <i>Drava</i> (liquid) <i>Amla</i> (sour) <i>Sara</i> (fluid) <i>Katu</i> (bitter)	Heat and radiance	<i>Ranjaka</i> <i>Sadhaka</i> <i>Alochaka</i> <i>Bhrajaka</i> <i>Pachaka</i>	Liver & spleen Heart Eyes Skin Small gut

Dosha and main seats	Main attributes	Main function	Five kinds of Dosha	Five specific seats
Kapha <i>Uras</i> or chest (Caraka) <i>Hridaya</i> (Head or heart) (Kashyapa) <i>Amashaya</i> or upper stomach <i>Sandhi</i> (Suruta)	 <i>Guru</i> (heavy) <i>Sita</i> (cold) <i>Mṛdu</i> (soft) <i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous) <i>Madhura</i> (sweet) <i>Sthira</i> (stable) <i>Picchila</i> (slimy)	Support And sustenance	<i>Kledaka</i> <i>Abalambaka</i> <i>Bodhaka</i> <i>Tarpaka</i> <i>Sleşaka</i>	Stomach Chest Throat Head Joints

General symptoms of Kshaya and Vriddhi: - *Doshas* when increased (*Pravṛddha*), manifest their signs and symptoms in accordance with the degree of increase, those in the state of diminution (*Kshaya*) give up their normal signs and symptoms and those in a state of equilibrium operate properly.^[15]

Causes of Kshaya and Vriddhi: - The causes of these stages of diminution and aggravation are *Samanya* and *Vishesa* factors. The generic concomitance (*Samanya*) is always the cause of augmentation (*Vriddhi*) of all beings, where as the variant factor (*Vishesa*) of their diminution (*Hrasa* or *kshaya*) is the cause provided both are applied.^[16]

VATA DOSHA^[17]

Vata dosha actions in Samaavastha: - *Vata dosha*, in its normal state, protects the body, bestows enthusiasm (eagerness, desires), respiration, all activities of body, mind and speech, initiation (and also execution) of urges

(of faces, urine etc), maintenance of *dhatu*s (various tissues) and proper functioning of sense organs.

Symptoms of pravṛddha vata: - *Vata dosa* in its increasing state produces emaciation, black discoloration, desires for hot things, tremors, distension of the abdomen, constipation, loss of strength, sleep and sensory functions, irrelevant speech, quivering giddiness and timidity (peevishness). Increased *Vata dosha* is the main cause of various diseases, and it can be controlled by *Vasti* (medicinal enema), so the *Vasti* is famous as the half of the total treatment. Increased *vata* aggravates all the three dosas in the body.

Symptoms of Vata kṣaya: - The symptoms of decreased *Vata dosa* are debility of the body, the person speaks very little and does very few physical activities, loss of sensation (awareness) and of consciousness with the occurrence of all the symptoms of increased *kapha*.

Causes of Vata Vrddhi & Kṣaya: - Vata is rough cool, light, subtle, mobile, non slimy and coarse. These qualities are aggravated by the use of drug diets, and regimens declined by medicines having opposite qualities. *Kasaya* (astringent), *Katu* (pungent) and *Tikta* (bitter) tastes cause aggravation of *Vata dosa* while *Madhura* (sweet), *Amla* (sour), and *Lavana* (saline) tastes alleviate it.

PITTA DOSHA^[18]

Action in normal (sama) stage: - *Pitta* represents heat, fire (*Agni*) and sun in the body. Proper digestion (*Pakti*), maintenance of the body temperature (*Usma*), vision (*darsana*), hunger (*kshut*), thirst (trad), appetite (*ruchi*), complexion (*prabha*), intelligence (*medha* and *dhi*), courage (*Saurya*), valour (*ranutva*) and softness (*mardava*) of the body. and happiness are the functions of *pitta dosa* in its normal state.

The following are the main actions of *pitta dosa* in its normal and abnormal states-

Normal functions	Abnormal functions
<i>Pakti</i> (Proper digestion)	<i>Apkti</i> (Improper digestion)
<i>Darsana</i> (Proper vision)	<i>Adarsana</i> (Visual errors and blindness)
<i>Sama ushma</i> (Normal temperature)	<i>Visma usma</i> (Abnormal temperature)
<i>Prakrta varna</i> (Proper complexion)	<i>Vikrta varna</i> (Impaired colour and complexion)
<i>Saurya</i> (Boldness)	<i>Bhaya</i> (Fear)
<i>Harsa</i> (Pleasure)	<i>Moha</i> (Delusion)
<i>Prasad</i> (Tranquillity)	<i>Vishada</i> (Worry)

Symptoms of pravradha pitta: - In all the *paittika* type of diseases, the inherent natural qualities and actions *pitta dosha* are quite obviously manifested wholly or partially. The qualities of *pitta* are *auṣnyam* (heat, pyrexia), *taikṣnyam* (sharpness) *dravatvam* (liquidity) *anatisnehah* (slight unctuousness), all colours except white and red, fishy smell, acid and sour tastes and fluidity. The symptoms commonly noticed in diseases caused by *pitta dosha* are burning sensation, heat, suppuration, perspiration, itching, discharge and redness are common available symptoms.

Yellowish colour of the skin, burning sensation, desire for coldness sleep, faintness, loss of strength and yellow colour of the urine, stool and eyes are symptom which denote increased *pitta* in the body. Suppuration, perspiration, sloughing, putrefaction, itching, discharge, redness, and the exhibition of its inherent smell colour and taste are the signs and symptoms helpful in the diagnosis of *paittika* diseases."

Symptoms of kshaya of pitta dosha: - *Kshaya* of *pitta dosha* causes weakness in digestive activity (*Mando-analah*), coldness (*Sitam*) and loss of complexion (*prabhahani*) When *pitta* is in the state of diminution, the aggravated *kapha* obstructs the channel of *Vata* causing coolness, heaviness and pain.

Causes of vraddhi and kshaya of pitta dosha: - *Pitta* has got *snigdha* (unctuous), *usna* (hot), *tikshna* (sharp)

drava (liquid) *amla* (sour) *sara* (fluid) and *katu* (pungent) qualities. It increases while the diets, drags and regimens, having these qualities are used and is soon overcome by the use of material having opposite qualities.

Other causes increasing *pitta dosha* are *krodha* (anger) *soka* (grief) *bhaya* (fear) *ayasa* (physical exertion) *upavasa* (fasting) *daha* (burning sensation) *maithuna* (sexual intercourse) *upagamana* (walking) and excessive use of various diets containing *katu* (pungent), *amla* (sour), *lavana* (saline), *tisksna* (sharp), *laghu* (light) and *vidahi* qualities. A Few types of alcohol, curd, sour fruits, *til* oil, *kulattha* etc. are specially indicated in the list, which cause aggravation of *pitta dosa*.

KAPHA DOSHA^[19]

Normal function of Kapha dosha: - *Kapha dosha* represents *soma* (water or moon) factor in the body'. Its effects in the normal state are *sneha* (unctuousness) *bandha* (cohesion), *sthirata* (steadiness), *Gaurava* (heaviness) *Vrsata* (virility or sexual vigour) *bala* (strength) *kṣama* (forbearance) *dhyti* (patience) and *alobha* (breadlessness).

Comparative chart of normal and abnormal functions performed by *kapha dosa* in the body.

Normal functions	Abnormal functions
<i>Drdtwa</i> (strength and tone or sturdiness)	<i>Shathilya</i> (flaccidity and looseness, weakness)
<i>Upacaya</i> (development and plumpness)	<i>Apacaya</i> or <i>kṛsatava</i> (emaciation)
<i>Utsaha</i> (enthusiasm)	<i>Alasya</i> (laziness)
<i>Vrsata</i> (potency)	<i>Klibata</i> (impotency)
<i>Jnana</i> or <i>Buddhi</i> (wisdom)	<i>Ajnana</i> or <i>moha</i> (ignorance) and such other pairs of qualities.'

Symptoms of *pravṛddha Kapha Dosha*: - *Kapha dosha* when increased produces debility of digestive activity (*agnisada*), excess of salivation (*praseka*), lassitude (*alasya*), feeling of heaviness (*gaurava*), white colourisation of face, faeces etc. (*saitya*), coldness (*saitya*) looseness of body parts (*anga saithilya*), dyspnoea (*swasa*) cough (*kasa*) and excess of sleep (*atinidrata*).

Symptoms of decreased *Kapha Dosha*: - Decrease of *kapha dosha* causes dizziness (*bhrama*) emptiness of organs of *kapha* (*Slesmasayanam sunyantvam*), palpitation (*hrdava*) and looseness of the joints. (*slatha sandhita*). Thirst (*trnsna*), sleeplessness (*prajagaraṇum*) roughness (*rukṣata*) and burning sensation (*antardaha*) are also notice and experienced in these cases.

Causes of *vṛddhi* and *kshaya* of *Kapha Dosha*: - The use of the drugs, diet and regimens, having heavy, cool, soft, unctuous, sweet, immobile and slimy, qualities, aggravate *kapha dosha* and the use of opposite attributes declines it." Sleeping in day time (*divasvapara*) absence of physical exercise (*avyayama*) laziness (*alasya*) and use of products prepared from milk and sugarcane, flesh obtained from animals living at *anupa desha*. in water etc. and habits like *samasano* (hita and unhita food articles) and *adhyasana* (to take food without proper digestion of previously taken food articles) are the main causative factors for the increase of *kapha dosha* in the body. The sweet, sour and saline tastes aggravate it. while it is subsided by astringent, pungent and bitter tastes.

Utility of *dosha* in treatment

दोषाः क्षीणा बृंहयितव्याः, कुपिताः प्रशमयितव्याः ।

वृद्धा निर्हर्तव्याः समाः परिपाल्या इति सिद्धान्तः ॥३१॥

(S. Ci. 33/3)^[20]

In the universe *karya dravyas* are innumerable. On the other hand *karana dravyas* are only nine in number viz. *Akasha, Vayu, Teja, Jala and Prthivi, Atman, Manas, Kala and Disha*. The knowledge of all the *karya dravyas* is not possible but by the knowledge of nine *karana dravyas* the knowledge of the whole of the world can be attained. The same process is with the *doshas*. Because of their highly multitudinous nature, diseases are innumerable. On the other hand, *doshas* are numberable and only three viz. *vata, pitta* and *kapha*. These *dosas* are innumerable viz. three are physical *doshas* pertaining to the body. Diseases caused by *doshas* are fever, diarrhoea, oedema, consumption, dyspnoea, *meha* (obstinate urinary disorder including diabetes) and *kustha* etc. Endogenous diseases can be divided into two groups' viz. *samanyaja* (general type caused by two or more *dosas*) and *nanatmaja* (the specific diseases caused by the vitiation of the *vata, pitta* and *kapha dosas*) type. Even though diseases are innumerable. Eighty *vataja*, forty *pittaja* and twenty *kaphaja*' diseases have been described as most commonly manifested ones. The *Samanyaja*

diseases, as they are manifested with the various combinations of three humours and can not be counted. But all these diseases can be controlled by the proper knowledge of the increased and decreased *dosas* so in Ayurvedic literature the *dosas* are described prominently.^[21]

Even then all the *dosas* have got one particular site and when they are vitiated at that particular place, either by *samana* (pacificatory) therapy or by *samsodhana* (purificatory or eliminatory) therapy, (mainly *vasti* for *vata dosha*, *virecana* (purgation) for *pitta* and *vaman* (emesis) for *kapha dosha*) the symptoms are subsided as a tree is perished when its root is cut.^[22]

Role of *dosas* in aetiopathogenesis of a disease: - So considering the location, signs, symptoms and causes of the vitiation of *vata, pitta* and *kapha*, all diseases caused by them are diagnosed on the basis of vitiation of respective *doshas*. It is only the exogenous diseases that are caused otherwise.^[23]

DISCUSSION

The contrary nature of all the physical *dosas* (viz. *vata, pitta* and *kapha*) works in the same method as the *mahagunas* viz. *Satva, Rajas* and *Tamas* being contrary to each other perform their function. The three *gunas* are in a dynamic equilibrium. They oppose each other but are dependent on each other and cannot be separated from each other.²³ *Dosha* are inevitable, mandatory and most important factor. We know that a particular disease is caused by a particular *dosha*. when a particular *dosha* gets involved in a disease process they produce symptoms which are particular to them. If we are unable to find out name of disease, to treat according *Dosha-akhasans kalpana*. So, we should protect our body to maintain of *dosha (samyavastha)* by life style, avoid stress, *pranayama*.^[24]

The aim of Ayurveda is clear, as it is beneficial to mankind in respect of both the worlds (i.e. this life and the life hereafter.) The methods of treatment prescribed in Ayurveda are meant both for the healthy (for the maintenance of this positive health and preservation from diseases) and patients (for the cure of their ailments) Good health stands at the very root of various acts, acquirement of wealth, gratification of desire and final emancipation. Diseases are destroyers of health, wellbeing and life.^[25]

CONCLUSION

The natural balance of the tripod of human body is maintained in normal condition and kept in tune by these opposite but having a tendency to balance, *dhatu-samya* of health. The imbalance is neutralized by a simple change in dietic and living regimens as the circle of *kṣaya* and *vṛddhi* is automatically controlled by the *ahoratra* (day and night) and annual seasonal circle.

Three conditions of all the worldly things are well known to all viz. evolution or construction, (*udbhava*), maintenance (*sthiti* or *dharana*) and destruction (*samhāra*), and for this purpose three powers are designated viz. Lord Brahma, Viṣṇu and Mahesa. In a living body growth, metabolism and movement can be understood as evolution, maintenance and destruction of the life (*ayus*), triad of dosas is responsible. *Doshas* are the material (substances) present in the body always, when they are normal (*avikṛta*) they attend to various functions of the body and so maintain it. But they have the tendency to become abnormal (*vikṛta*), undergoing increase or decrease in their quantity and in one or more of their qualities. The diseases, generated by in abnormality of the dosas, if not treated properly they may lead to death.

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