

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF PRAKRITI AND IT'S RELATION WITH LIFESTYLE

Bushra Khanam¹, Sombir Sheoran², Kamini Dhiman³

¹Final year PG Scholar, Department of Prasuti Tantra & Stri Roga, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi, India

²Final Year PG Scholar, Department of Shalya Tantra, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi, India

³Associate Professor, Department of Prasuti Tantra & Stri Roga, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi, India

Email: bushrakhanam14@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The primary aim of Ayurveda is maintaining health of the healthy individual and curing the diseases of diseased person. Any disturbance in the equilibrium of *Doshas* and *Dhatus* is known as *Vikara* and its equilibrium is *Prakriti*. This conceptual study provides detailed description about *Prakriti* and its relation with lifestyle and its impact on health, menstruation and menopause. Determination of child's *Prakriti* in newborn stage helps to differentiate the baby from other children by knowing peculiar characters. It also helps to maintain the health throughout the life span. Dietary requirement should be modified according to the *Prakriti* (constitution) of the individual. Acharyas has also directed for the selection of *Ahara* according to ones *Prakriti*. This is one of the foremost opinions regarding the customization of diet in the human history. According to classification of *Prakriti*, *Ayurveda* has given *Pathya Ahara* and *Vihar* are for prevention of lifestyle. In Ayurvedic view, lifestyle is the very important factor for health, by knowing the *Prakriti* one will know about the strength of a person to conflict with the lifestyle diseases. So here we find the important relation between *Prakriti* and lifestyle.

Keywords: *kapha, pitta, prakrati, lifestyle, vata*

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, the word *Prakriti* has been used in the sense of *Doshaja Prakriti* or *Dehaja Prakriti*. According to *Rasa-Vaisheshik*, *Prakriti* is a state which is formed at the time of fertilization due to eminence of *Dosha*¹. It remains unchanged from fertilization till death. According to *Acharya Sushruta* and *Charaka*, *Prakriti* is determined at the time of fertilization due to the predominance or increased status of *Dosha* which is normal or physiological. Although *Prakriti* is determined by the *Dosha* predominantly involved,

some other factors are also involved in the *Prakriti* formation as described by *Acharya Charaka* in *Vimana-Sthana*. These factors are *Shukra-Shonita*, status of uterus at the time of fertilization, status of environmental time period, food and regimen adopted by mother during pregnancy and nature of *Mahabhutas* comprising the fetus. The fetus gets with one or more of the *Doshas* which are dominantly associated with the above-mentioned factors.

Prakriti of an individual is determined on the basis of

these dominant *Doshas* in the above-mentioned factors when they initially unite in the form of fetus. Therefore, *Prakriti* of some people is dominated by *Kapha*, some others by *Pitta*, some others by *Vata* and some others by the combination of two *Doshas*. In some other cases, however, the equilibrium of *Doshas* is well maintained.^{2,3}

Although all these factors mentioned above play an important role in the determination of *Prakriti*, *Doshas* are involved primarily in the formation of *Prakriti* of above-mentioned factors. Therefore, *Doshas* are the root cause in the initiation and formation of *Prakriti* of any individual. Characters which are manifested in a person of any specific *Prakriti* depend upon properties of the *Dosha* involved. Characters of various personalities are discussed below.

Aim and Objectives-

- Understanding the various aspect of *Prakriti* and its relation with lifestyle.
- Impact of Lifestyle on health and different stages of women's life.

Materials and Methodology-

The conceptual study is done by reviewing the available classical literatures including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Ashtanga Sangraha* and other Ayurvedic texts and related articles were peer reviewed.

PRAKRITI-

Etymology:

The word *Prakriti* has been derived from "*Prakarshen Karoti Iti Prakriti*" which means manifestation of special characteristics due to predominance.⁴ *Prakriti* means natural constitution of the human body. 'Pra' means 'source of origin' or 'beginning' and 'Kriti' means 'to form'. So that *Prakriti* means 'natural form'.

Definition:

*Praktistu Swabhavah*⁵ *Prakriti* is an expression of one's own constitution.

*Prakritih Shareer Swaroopam*⁶ *Prakriti* is enumeration of body features, internal as well as external.

The word *Prakriti* means-

- Making before or at first.
- Original or primary substance

- Fundamental form, pattern, standard model, rule
- Nature, character, constitution.

Types of *Prakriti*:

Prakriti is initially of two types⁷

- *Doshaja*
- *Gunaja*

Doshaja Prakriti:

According to predominance one or two *Doshas*, types of *Prakriti* are seven-

1. *Vataja*,
2. *Pittaja*
3. *Kaphaja*,
4. *Vata-Pittaja*
5. *Vata-Kaphaja*,
6. *Pitta-Kaphaja*
7. *Vata-Pitta-Kaphaja*

1. *Vataja Prakriti*:

Characters of *Vataja Prakriti* persons are as follows.^{8,9,10}

- a. **Rukshta**: Unctuousness, emaciation and dwarfness of the body,
- b. **Laghuta**: Light and inconsistent gait, action, food and movement.
- c. **Chalata**: Unstable joints, jaws, eyes, eye brows, lips, tongue, head, shoulder, hands and legs.
- d. **Bahuta**: Talkativeness, abundance of tendons and veins.
- e. **Shighrata**: Quick in initiating actions, affliction with fear, in understanding and forgetting things, quick in likes and dislikes.
- f. **Shitata**: Intolerance to cold things, shivering and stiffness.
- g. **Parushta**: Roughness of hair of the head, face and body, nails, face, hands and feet.
- h. **Vishadta**: Cracking of the limbs and organs, cracking sound in joints when they move.

2. *Pittaja Prakriti*:

Characters of *Pittaja Prakriti* persons are as follows^{11,12,13}

- a. **Ushanata**: Intolerance to hot things, black moles, excessive hunger and thirst, quick advent of wrinkles, graying of hairs and baldness,
- b. **Tikshnata**: Sharp physical strength, strong digestive power, intake of food and drink in large quantity, inability to face difficult situations.

- c. **Dravata:** Looseness and softness of joints and muscles, voiding of sweat, urine and feces in large quantity.
- d. **Visrata:** Putrid smell of axilla, mouth, head and body in excess.

3. **Kaphaja Prakriti:**

Characters of *Kaphaja Prakriti* persons are as follow^{14,15,16}

- a. **Snigdhatta:** Unctuousness of organs.
- b. **Shlakshnta:** Smoothness of organs.
- c. **Mriduta:** Pleasing appearance, tenderness and clarity of complexion.
- d. **Madhurta:** Increased quantity of semen, desire for sexual intercourse and number of procreation.
- e. **Sarata:** Firmness, compactness and stability of the body.
- f. **Sandrata:** Plumpness and roundedness of all organs.
- g. **Mandta:** Slow in action, intake of food and movement.
- h. **Stimita:** Slow in initiating actions, getting irritated and morbid manifestations.
- i. **Guruta:** Non-slippery and stable gait with entire sole of the feet pressing against the ground.
- j. **Shitata:** Lack of intensity in hunger, thirst, heat and perspiration.
- k. **Vijjala:** Firmness and compactness in joints.
- l. **Achha:** Clarity and unctuousness in complexion, appearance and voice.

Dwandvaja Prakriti¹⁷

Individuals having a constitution dominated by a combination of two *Doshas* are characterized by the combination of the manifestations of the respective *Doshas*.

Sama doshaja Prakriti¹⁸

A *Sama doshaja* type of individual who has all the *Doshas* in a state of equilibrium is endowed with good qualities of all three types of individuals described above.

- **Cycle of age:**

Balya awastha – *Kapha Pradhana*

Yuva awastha – *Pitta Pradhana*

Vridhha awastha – *Vata Pradhana*

- **Cycle of Time:**

Purvanha/after sunrise- *Kapha Pradhana*

Maddhyanha/mid night- *Pitta Pradhana*
Apranaha/just before sunset- *Vata Pradhana*

- **Cycle of seasons:**

Autumn season- *Kapha* Predominant

Winter season- *Pitta* Predominant

Rainy season- *Vata* Predominant

- **Cycle of uterus:**

Uterus (*Garbhashaya*); the condition of the uterus –

Proliferative /Safe phase – *Kapha* Predominant

Ovulation Phase – *Pitta* Predominant

Menstrual /Bleeding Phase – *Vata* Predominant

Bhautika Prakriti: According to predominance of *Pancha bhautika* elements, there are 5 types of *Prakriti*-

1. *Parthiva*

2. *Apya*

3. *Taijas*

4. *Vayaviya*

5. *Akashiya*.

Gunamayi Prakriti: According to predominance of *Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Gunamayi* or *Manas Prakriti* is decide. This classification has mentioned in *AstangSanghara*-

1. *Jatiniyat Prakriti*- features according to caste like *Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra*.

2. *Deshaniyat Prakriti* – habitation

3. *Kalaniyat Prakriti* –seasonal

4. *Vayaniyat Prakriti*- age : Childhood (*Kapha* increase), Youth (*Pitta* increase), Old age (*Vata* increase)

5. *Balaniyat Prakriti*- strength

6. *Pratyatmaniyat Prakriti*.

Lifestyle

Lifestyle is the interests, opinions, behaviors and behavioral orientations of an individual, group, or culture. The term was introduced by Austrian psychologist Alfred Adler, meaning of "a person's basic character as established early in childhood. A lifestyle usually reflects an individual's attitudes, way of life and values. Lifestyle is referred to the characteristics of population of a region in special place and time. It includes day to day behaviors and functions of individuals in job, diet and activities.

As per WHO, 60% of related factors to entity health and quality of life are correlated to lifestyle. Millions

of people follow an unhealthy lifestyle. Hence, they come across infirmity, disability and even fatality. Problems like overweight, cardio-vascular diseases, metabolic diseases, joint and skeletal problems and hypertension can be caused by an unhealthy lifestyle. Advanced technology facilitates the life of human beings. Misuse of technology may result in disagreeable consequences. For example, using of mobile phone, Television and Computer up to midnight, may effect on the pattern of sleep, duration of the sleep and it may disturb sleep or insomnia. Addiction to use mobile phone is related to depression symptoms, excessive use in night may disturb digestion and circadian rhythm.

Impact on health: Lifestyle plays an important role in staying healthy. On the whole health is what we have placed in our body; we come stringently and without fail to maintain our mental, physical and spiritual fitness. When it comes to our diet, we understand the important elements of maintaining all health; Eating natural, whole food and commitment to avoiding high food items in fat and oil. But physical fitness, more than anything else, helps in protecting our body from disease, keeps us strong and healthy in the future.

An effective fitness routine involves exercise that works with current health and lifestyle. Life of a person is known as lifestyle. Now a day's sedentary lifestyle is a high risk factor in common diseases. Psychotic lifestyle is a type of lifestyle, with any or irregular physical activity. A person who lives in a sedentary lifestyle is identified as colloquial. There is little or no vigorous physical exercise involved in sitting activities / job, reading, viewing television and using computers for a long day. According to a new study, sedentary lifestyle can be more dangerous for the health than smoking.¹⁹

Lifestyle and Menstruation:

Various studies conducted in students including medical student's show that high risk for developing menstrual irregularities probably due to stressful lifestyle, long hours of work, insufficient sleep, irregular food and exercise habits.²⁰ Menstrual problems frequently affect the quality of life of young girls and may indirectly affect on quality of life of family members, social life and economy as well. Early identification and

sorting of etiologies in relation to abnormal menstruation in women's health is mostly neglected by primary health care.²¹ So, early interventions at etiological level like disorders of body mass index (BMI), dietary habits, Daily activities, sleep, physical exercise and psychological stress may prevent menstrual disorders.

Lifestyle and Menopause-

Menopause is a stage of normal aging process, but considerably affects the different aspects of women and their lifestyle.²² Stabilizing a healthy lifestyle is important way to control predisposing factors of disease conditions in menopausal women. Balance calorie intake and physical activity to achieve and maintain a healthy range of body weight, selection of healthy food programs, and avoiding alcohol use are the main advices and fundamentals of a healthy lifestyle in these women.²³ Menopausal symptoms such as mood swings, mild depression and anxiety or stress related to handling a busy life, counseling may be an effective option.

Prakriti and lifestyle

Every individual should know about her *Prakriti*, so that one can know which are the healthy lifestyle and eating habits for her by adopting which she can maintain her well state and prevent any disease. For e.g if a person is found to have *Vata* predominant *Prakriti* she is advised all those food stuffs which produce more cold in the body. It is because she is having already increased cold in the body and by taking more cold producing regimens she may obtain many disorders. If we know the *Prakriti this can be done only*. By knowing the *Prakriti* one will know about the strength of a person to conflict with the lifestyle diseases.

According to classification of *Prakriti*, *Ayurveda* has given *Pathya Aahar* and *Vihar* are for prevention of lifestyle disorders. *Ayurveda* narrated this phenomenon as '*Pragya Aparadha*' which is one of the three basic causes of any disease. There are ample improper actions as an impact of *Pragya Aparadha* which are root causes of various diseases, e.g. habit of suppression of urge in improper lifestyle can be considered as one of the main causes of lifestyle diseases. *Acharya Charaka* described as, the first line of treatment is removal of these accumulated waste products.

Vata has similar characteristics which can be compared with psychosomatic functions. Therefore *Vata Prakriti* is considered to be more prone to *Karshya* and *Mansika Vyadies*. Sleep is one of the essential factors related with equilibrium of the *Dosha*. As per Ayurvedic classics, sleep upto 8 hours and day time sleeping is good for *Vata Prakriti*, however day time sleeping is not recommended for *Kapha* and *Pitta Prakriti*. Maximum 6 hours sleep is

DISCUSSION

Prakriti and lifestyle are natural phenomena besides occur essentially. All the physiological process are directly controlled by *Vata, Pitta, Kapha and Sattwa, Raja, Tama*, thus by the predominant *Dosha* is a particular type of *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is favorable state of the *Doshas*, which is materialized at the time of formation of *Garbha* due to self-excitatory causes and which run from birth to death. *Prakriti* is basically two types due to predominance of *Dosha*, mainly physical known as *Doshaja* and due to reflection of psychological *Gunaja*. detailed description of *Prakriti* In *brihat trayi* *Prakriti* is of 7 types *tridoshik* theory The principles of maintaining a proper well-being of the body and lifestyle are two folds- the observance of personal seasonal deportment and for maintaining way of life it must be opposite to *Prakriti* of an individual as the objective of the science is establishing equilibrium of the body sufficient in *Kapha* and *Pitta Prakriti*.

Prakriti is related to physical and mental tendencies that determine susceptibility to diseases; the ancient texts of Ayurveda also provide guidelines for maintaining lifestyles in accordance with one's *Prakriti* for continued healthy living in a personalized manner. *Vata, Pitta, and Kapha Prakriti* having unique metabolic activities. According to *Ayurveda, Kapha* is *Manda have Manda Agni, Pitta* is *Sheeghra have teekshagni, and Vata* have *Visham Agni* (metabolism).

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is the life science with ways to prevent and manage lifestyle diseases. It provides better solution in the forms of proper dietary management, healthy lifestyle advises. *Sadvritta* and *Aachara Rasayana* are

utmost important to maintain a healthy and happy psychological lifestyle. Lifestyle of a person is a cumulative product of his physical capacity co-ordinated with psychological functioning, displayed in the form of dietary habits, living pattern and behaviour. Uncontrolled urbanization, increased pollution, lack of control over regulation of food quality and contents of adulteration and improper dietary-living pattern disturbing the biological clock, all form the main reasons for occurrence of lifestyle diseases.

REFERENCES

1. Dwivedi L D. Ayurveda ke mula siddhanta evam unaki upadeyata part 1. Chaukhamba Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy; 1991. p. 106
2. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol.8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 95.
3. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita. Sharirsthana. Vol. 4. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Samsthana; 2001. Ayurvedatvatvasandipika Hindi Commentry by Kaviraj Dr. Ambikadutt Shastri; p. 63
4. Dwivedi L D. Ayurveda ke mula siddhanta evam unaki upadeyata part 1. Chaukhamba Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy; 1991. p. 106
5. Carakasamhita with Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Acharya Sri Cakrapanidatta. Acharya Vaidya Y davji Trikamji., editor, Varanasi: chaukhamba surbharti Prakashan; 2014. Viman Shtan 8/95.
6. Vagbhata Astangahrdaya. Commentary: Sarvangasundara of Arundatta and Ayurvedarasayana of Hemadri. Pt. Hari Sadasiva Sastri editor. Varanasi. Chaukhamba Surbharti Prakashan;2016.sutra-sthan 1/10
7. Dr. Nandini Dilip Dhargalkar Sharira Kriya Vigyana. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sankrit Series office; 2014 page no.144.
8. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol. 8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 98.
9. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita. Sharirsthana. Vol. 4. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Samsthana; 2001. Ayurvedatvatvasandipika Hindi Commentry by Kaviraj Dr. Ambikadutt Shastri; pp. 64–66.
10. Vagbatt, Ashtang Hridaya. Vidvanamanoranjini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri. In: Tripathi Indradev, Dr, Tripathi Srikant., Dr, editors. Sharirsthan. Vol. 3. Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy; 1994. pp. 84–89.

11. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol. 8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 97.
12. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita. Sharirsthana. Vol. 4. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Samsthana; 2001. Ayurvedatvatvasandipika Hindi Commentry by Kaviraj Dr. Ambikadutt Shastri; pp. 67–69.
13. Vagbatt, Ashtang Hridaya. Vidvanamanoranjini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri. In: Tripathi I, Tripathi S, editors. Sharirsthan. Vol. 3. Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy; 1994. pp. 90–95.
14. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol. 8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 96.
15. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita. Sharirsthana. Vol. 4. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Samsthana; 2001. Ayurvedatvatvasandipika Hindi Commentry by Kaviraj Dr. Ambikadutt Shastri; pp. 70–72.
16. Vagbatt, Ashtang Hridaya. Vidvanamanoranjini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri. In: Tripathi I, Tripathi S, editors. Sharirsthan. Vol. 3. Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy; 1994. pp. 93–103.
17. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol. 8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 99.
18. Agnivesha, Charak Samhita. Vimansthan. Vol. 8. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 1998. Vidyotini Hindi Commentry by Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhanath Chaturvedi; p. 100.
19. Kamakhya Kumar, Importance of Healthy Life Style in Healthy living, Juniper Online Journal of Public Health, vol 2, issue 5, nov 2017
20. Impact of Life Style and Dietary Habits on Menstrual Cycle of College Students. Index Copernicus Value (2013): 6.14 |
21. Mohite RV, Mohite VR; Correlates of the menstrual problems among rural college students of Satara district. AI Ameen J Med Sci. 2013;6(3):213-8.
22. Department of Midwifery and Reproductive Health, faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.
23. Department of Midwifery, Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Member of mother & child care research center, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences and Health Services, Hamadan, Iran.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Bushra Khanam et al: A Comprehensive Review On Concept Of Prakriti And Relation With Lifestyle. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2019 {cited September, 2019} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1597_1602.pdf