ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the life science with prime goal of promotion of health and prevention of disease in healthy individuals and alleviation of disease in diseased. The concept of Prakruti (Constitution) has been described in all Ayurvediya classics in very detail emphasizing its importance. The Prakruti appears itself in a unique way in individuals, it discriminates and describes a person apart from others. Prakruti comprises of anatomical, physiological, psychological and social framework of a person. It is employed to understand the temperament of an individual. Prakruti is explained both in Dashvidha Parikshya Bhav which are to be considered before employing treatment for diseased and in Swastha Chatushka employing its importance in healthy. Deha Prakruti explains the anatomical and physiological component where as Manas Prakruti describes the psychological and social component.

KEY WORD: Prakruti, Deha Prakruti, Manas Prakruti, constitution, Dashvidha Parikshya Bhav.

INTRODUCTION

Nidan (diagnosis) and Chikitsa (treatment) in Ayurveda system of medicine is not complete without defining the Prakruti (constitution) of an individual. Since every person is having his own Prakruti hence treatment also varies according to the Prakruti of the individual. Ayurveda believes in employing medicine to a specific individual rather to a group or system. Prakruti makes every person unique, it means physiological and psychological characteristics differ from person to person depending upon the Prakruti. Hence Prakruti determines how a
person will react to its surroundings and influenced by various external factors like Ahara, Vihara, Kala, Rasa and Aushadh (medicine). Above mentioned factors are important for knowledge of Nidan (diagnosis), Chikitsa (treatment), Pathya-Apathya (do and don’ts) and Sadhyata Asadhyata (prognosis) of Vyadhi (disease). And if these factors are properly observed or followed they will keep a person Swastha (healthy).

Current advances in the field of Ayurveda, Genomics and Personalized medicine have motivated several workers to explore a possible association between Prakruti and different objective parameters; encircling the fields of hematology, biochemistry, physiology, psychology and genomics. Ayurveda has got its unique specialty of holistic approach and includes all the factors which are necessary for maintenance of health along with treatment of diseases.

**Prakruti:** In Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Prakruti is defined according to the word derivation that is it formed by three letters Pra, Kru and Ti. The letter Pra symbolizes Prakrashta Guna, the superior quality- Sattva, Kru for moderate Guna, the Rajas and Ti for Tamas.

*Prakruti* can be understood as Swabhava which means one’s ‘Pratytmaniyatroop’ i.e an expression of various body functions in the form of morphology, physiology and behavior of an individual. According to Aacharya Sushruta, Prakruti is decided in the very initial stage i.e. during the union of Shukra and Shonit (sperm and ovum) itself, the dominant Dosha form the Prakruti of the individual.\(^1\) Various body functions and individual characteristics are determined by two intermingling sets of Dosha: Prakruta or Arambhaka Dosha and Vaikruta or Ahara- Mala Sambhavja Dosha. The Prakruta Dosha which is Utkata (predominant) during Garbhadhan (conception) is responsible for determining Prakruti.

**Types of Prakruti**

In Ayurvediya texts Prakruti is classified as.

1. Doshaja /Deha Prakruti
2. Manasa Prakruti
3. Bhautika Prakruti
4. Jatyadi Prakruti

Briefly it can again be divided as Jata Prakruti and Jatottara Prakruti.
**Doshaja or Deha Prakruti**

Doshaja Prakruti is also known Sharirika Prakruti Deha Prakruti. Deha Prakruti is classified on basis of dominance of Dosha. There are seven types of Doshaja Prakruti according to the predominance of one Dosha. Vata, Pitta and Shleshma are Ekadoshaja i.e. due to the predominance of one Dosha. Vata-Pittaja, Vata-Shleshmaja, and Pitta-Shleshmaja are Dwandja (mixed) i.e. due to the predominance of two Dosha. Sama-Prakruti occurs due to the predominance of all three Dosha. According to Aacharya Vagbhatta, individuals of Sama Prakruti are Shreshtha (excellent) while Dwandja Prakruti are Nindya (condemned). The person of Vata, Pitta and Kapha predominance are said Sadaatur (always sick).

**Manasa Prakruti**

On the basis of Manas Guna (Satva, Raja, and Tama), there are three types of Manasa Prakruti.
1. Satvik.
2. Rajas.
3. Tamas.

These three types of Manas Prakruti are subdivided into sixteen/eighteen types.

**Satvik Manas Prakruti:** Brahma, Mahendra, Varun, Kaubera, Gandharva, Yamy and Rishi Satva.

**Rajasa Manasa Prakruti:** Asura, Rakshasa, Paishacha, Preta, Sarpa and Shakuna.

**Tamasa Manasa Prakruti:** Pashava, Matsya and Vanaspatya

Acharya Kashyap also described Prajapatiya Kaya under Satvik and Yaksha under Rajasa Prakruti.

**Bhautika Prakruti**

Aacharya Sushruta has described five types of Prakruti according to the dominance of Panchmahabhuta which are called as Bhautika Prakruti - Parthiva, Apya, Taijas, Vayaviya and Akashiya.

**Jatyadi Prakruti**

Acharya Charaka has described six types of Jatyadi Prakruti and Astangh Sangrah has described these as the factors influencing Prakruti.
Factors determining Prakruti

Aacharya Charak has incorporated some factors in the formation of Prakruti, Prakruti of an individual depends on Shukra Prakruti (sperm), Shonita Prakruti (ovum), Kala Prakruti (time or season), Garbhashaya Prakruti (condition of uterus), Maturahar-Vihar Prakruti (diet and behaviour of mother) and Mahabhutavikar Prakruti.[6] Others are.

2. Kulaprasakta (familial predisposition)
3. Desha (Region): There is regional specificity, for example in Anupa Desh, Kapha Dosha is prominent one.
4. Kala (season): In each season, there is dominance of certain Dosha.
5. Vaya (Age): Age factor has importance in development of Prakruti, for example in old age Vata Dosha is prominent and hence there are more chances of getting affected by Vataj disorders in old age.
6. Pratyatmaniyata (personal habits & individual specificities)

Importance of Prakruti Knowledge

Prakruti has great importance in both healthy and diseased persons. It is comprehensive in scope, spanning all physical, mental, psychological and social aspects. Prakruti and Sattva Pariksha (investigations) have been included in tenfold investigation methods i.e Dashavidha Atura-Pariksha[8] in Ayurveda. Determination of Prakruti not merely helps diagnosis but also provides detailed instructions to adopt healthy life style for good health. The clinical and therapeutic utility of the knowledge of Prakruti has been vibrantly described by the Aacharya Charaka.[9]

Aacharya Charaka has advised during the prescription of treatment the factors like Dosha, Bhesaj (drug), Kala (time), Desha (place), Bala (strength), Sharir (body), Ahara (diet), Satmya (homologation), Satva (mind), Prakruti (constitution), Vaya (age) should be considered. The psychosomatic constitution or Prakruti knowledge is helpful in achieving both the goals of Ayurveda i.e. prevention of diseases in healthy and in treatment.

Role of Prakruti knowledge in Swasthaya Swastha Rakshanm (Prevention of disease)

In the explanation of Rogayatana[10] (base of diseases), Asatmyaindriyartha Samyoga (improper use of senses) is regarded as one of the causes. Asatmayaindriyartha Samyoga is illustrated as excessive utilization, non utilization and wrong utilization of Indriya (senses), which causes an impediment to the sense perception, and hence disease. When Indriyas are
properly utilized, normality of sense faculties can be maintained and the perception of various objects is properly regulated. To avoid the disturbance in them, efforts should be made to maintain their normal condition. One of these efforts is performance of duties in contradistinction with the qualities of one’s own constitution including temperament.\textsuperscript{[11]} The diurnal and seasonal regimens (Dincharya and Ritucharya) have been advised in the classics for maintenance of healthy state of an individual. One should adopt Dinacharya and Ritucharya according the individual constitution. As per need of Prakruti to keep body healthy and Dosha in equilibrium state, for example Kapha Prakruti persons need more exercise, Laghu Ahara to keep their body fit and they should avoid Divaswapna\textsuperscript{[12]}, whereas Vata Prakruti persons are advised to take nutritious and heavy food (Guruahara), less exercise and can enjoy Divaswapna. This is in this context, that Ayurveda advocates extensive preventive measures in terms of Swastha Vritta, Sadvritta, Dincharya, Ritucharya etc. By understanding the individual constitution of every individual, one can know which food, drink, exercise etc. are appropriate for maintaining one’s health.

**Use of Rasayana**

Acharya Charaka has specially mentioned that use of Rasayana (rejuvenation therapy) should be specific according to Prakruti of the individual.\textsuperscript{[13]} Acharya Sushruta has constrained the use of Rasayana for some Prakruti by mentioning that intemperate, lazy, indigent, careless, immoral, sinful and persons disregarding medication regime are contraindicated for the use of Rasayana.\textsuperscript{[14]}

**Role of Prakruti in Mansika Swasthya** (Psychological health): In context of Sadvritta Acharya Charaka has advised to avoid the company of certain personalities like Papavritta (people of sinful conduct, back biters, those who are quarrelsome, indulge in sarcastic remarks about others, greedy, cruel, indulging in defaming, fickle minded, serving enemy, devoid of compassion and those who do not follow the virtuous course of life).\textsuperscript{[15]} Though Acharyas have also mentioned the qualities to be sought for company e.g. those who have attained maturity by virtue of wisdom, learning, conduct, patience, memory and meditation, those who are matured and learned ones, those who maintain the company of matured persons, those who are acquainted with human nature, devoid of anxieties, well behaved, pacified, follow righteous course of action, advocate good conduct and those whose very name and sight are auspicious.\textsuperscript{[16]}
Ritucharya\cite{17}

The six *Rasa* (taste) are produced due to increase of same qualities in the six different season which are responsible for generation of *Dosha* of same characters as well as cessation (*Prashama*) of opposite one based mainly on *Prakruti*.

**Hemant Ritucharya:** In *Hemant Ritu* especially the *Vata Prakruti* person should observe about *Dinacharya* (daily lifestyle) as there is more chance of *Vata Prakopa*. This *Kala* (season) is beneficial for increase in *Kapha Dosha* that is *Kapha Sanchaya* which is going to affect in *Vasanta Ritu* (*Kapha Prakopa*). So the *Kapha Prakruti* individual must be cautious during this *Ritu* for the increase in *Kapha* i.e. he should not enjoy sweeter, oily and heavy food and more rest. *Pitta Prakruti* person can enjoy except excess of *Amla* (sour) and *Lavana Rasa* (salty).

**Shishir Ritucharya:** *Ritucharya* (seasonal lifestyle) in *Shishir* is like that of *Hemant Ritu*. But one must practice warm and without air-breezy. He should eat sumptuous hot food and drink hot water and other drinks too. The *Tikta* (bitter) *Rasa* is produced in this *Ritu* (season) and so *Vata Dosha* start increasing. The *Tikta, Kashaya rasa* (bitter, astringent) along with cold and *Laghu* (light) diet should be omitted.

In *Shishira Ritu* the *Kapha Prakruti* person should not practice *Kaphaja Ahara* and *Vihara* to prevent *Kapha Chaya* (accumulation). *Kapha Prakruti* Person should take mainly *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* (pungent, bitter, astringent) in diet.

**Vasant Ritucharya:** Similarly in *Vasant Ritu*, *Kapha Prakopa* is prominent causing various *Kaphaja* diseases. In *Kapha Prakruti* person these changes are more remarkable. The *Drava Guna* (liquid) of *Kapha* increases in this period which results into loss of appetite and poor digestion (*Agnimandya*). So this season is mainly for *Kapha Dosha* only, which should be controlled by *Ritucharya* (seasonal lifestyle).

**Grisham Ritucharya:** In *Grisham Ritu* the *Kapha dosha* decreases and the *Vata Dosha* increases. The atmosphere becomes very stagnant and dry (*Ruksha*) producing *Katu Rasa* (Pungent). The *Pitta Prakruti* persons are more affected due to *Ushna* (hot) and *Tikshna* (penetrating) *Guna*. The *Grishma* (summer) being *Vata Chaya Kala*, the *Vata Prakruti* persons should take care about the *Vata Dosha*. He should not practise *Vataja Ahara* and
Vihara. Bowels should be kept normal with Sneham (ointing) or Basti (enema) Shodhana. The Kaphaja persons should behave according to Ritucharya.

Varsha Ritucharya: Due to Adana Kala (summer solstice) the strength and power is diminished. The damp and cloudy atmosphere, make the appetite and digestion power poor. So the cloudy weather is responsible for increase in Vata due to Shita guna.

The new rain water is fresh, cold and muddy and so is Amla Vipaki which is reason for accumulation of Pitta dosha (Sanchay). So during this season the chances of diseases are more and hence one must keep his Agni normal.

Sharad Ritucharya: The Pitta Dosha which aggravates in Varsha ritu (Pitta Sanchay) is provoked by the hot and penetrating Sun leading to Pitta Prakopa. The blood is also vitiated due to Pitta Dosha as both are having same faculties. The Agni is also deficient (Agnimandya) due to vitiated Pitta Dosha.

In Sharad the wind from Eastern side is in motion, which being damp in nature may aggravate the Vata Vyadhi and so is not advisable. So in Sharada Ritu one should practice sweet, light, astringent and bitter diet which will not increase Pitta Dosha.

Role of Prakruti knowledge in Aturasya Vikara Prashaman (curative aspects)
The Prakruti of a person determines the following
(1) Bala Maan Gyanartha (to know the inborn vigor) –while explaining the Prakruti Aacharya Charaka has mentioned the comparative strength of different type of Prakruti for example the Vata Prakruti persons are said Alpabala (less vigor) and Kaphaja Prakruti persons are said Balavanta (who have great vigor).[18]

(2) Vulnerability for different diseases – With the knowledge of Prakruti the susceptibility for particular type of diseases of an individual can be assessed. For example the Kapha Prakruti persons are more prone to Kaphaj Nanatmaj Vikara[19] like Dhamani Pratichaya or Kaphaj Samanyaj Vikar like Agnimandhya, Pratishyaya etc. similarly Pitta and Vata Prakruti persons are more prone to Pittaja and Vataja Vikara respectively. Thus the Prakruti knowledge can help in preventing such diseases by observing proper diet and life style.

(3) Chikitsa Siddhanta Nishechayartha[20] (Selection of line of management) - Aacharya Sushruta has mentioned that the treatment should be according to the Prakruti of the
individual. The role of Prakruti is also important for deciding the line of management, e.g. in Amaja Vyadhi like Jvara, for Kapha Prakruti person complete Aptarpana Chikitsa can be adapted whereas in case of Vata Prakruti person Aptarpana should be planned partially. While selecting procedures also Prakruti determination is to be kept in mind for example Pitta Prakruti persons are not suitable for procedures like Swedan and Agni Karma. Drugs selected for the management of diseases are also according the Prakruti of the individual.

(4) Aushadh Matra Nishchayrtha (Drug Doses) – Aushadh Matra is decided according to Prakruti, in general Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakruti persons, the Alpa, Madhya and Pravara Matra of Bheshaja are adopted respectively. For example Bhallatak either should not be prescribed, or dose should be reduced to the person with Pitta Prakruti or in Sharad Ritu. Similarly, the drugs which alleviate Vata and Kapha either should not be prescribed or dose should be reduced in, Pravrita and Vasant in Vata Prakruti and Kapha Prakruti person respectively.

(5) Sadhyata Asadhya Nischayrtha (To Know Prognosis of Disease) – In description of Sadhyata- Asadhya Aacharya Charaka has described role of Prakruti. According to Aacharya Charaka, if Nidan (cause), Purvarupa (prodromal symptoms) and Rupa (symptom) are few and Dushya is not similar to Dosha in quality nor is Dosha as (dominant) in Prakruti, the Kala is also different, Desha is also different, movement of Dosha is one sided, origin of disorder is recent, absence of complication, involvement of one Dosha in pathogenesis, body capable of tolerating all therapeutic measures and proper availability of Chatushpada (physician, drug, attendant, and patient) indicates that the disease is easily curable. In the same way the diseases with medium severity of Nidan, Purvarupa and Rupa, similarity of any one of Kala, Prakruti and Dushya, the patient being the pregnant lady, old man and child, treatment measures including Shalya Karma, Kshar or Agni Prayog, the disease is Achirothitta (not recently developed), located in Marma (vital parts), involving of one Roga Marga but fully equipped Chatushpada- such diseases are Kashta Sadhya (difficult to cure). Thus with the knowledge of Prakruti prognosis of disease can be determined.

6) In Deciding Pathya and Apathya: Pathya and Apathya can also be decided with the knowledge of Prakruti. For two persons suffering from same disease but different Prakruti their Pathya will also be different. For example, for Krish Pramehi mainly Vata prakruti persons and Sthula Pramehi mainly Kapha Prakruti persons Pathya and Apathya must be different.
CONCLUSION

Prakruti is an important concept of Ayurveda that explains individuality and has its role in Pratishedha (prevention), Nidan (diagnosis) and Chikitsa (treatment) of disease. It expresses a unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of Dosha right from birth. Aacharya Charaka has described Prakruti in very systematic, elaborated and interpretive manner. The knowledge of one’s Prakruti in healthy individuals help in modifying one’s Ahar, Vihar, Dincharya or Ritucharya etc. according to their constitution. That is in healthy, one can know what to eat, how much exercise is needed, which places are favorable for him, prone to which diseases so that one can follow diet, day and seasonal regimen according to one’s constitution to remain healthy. In case of Aatur, the knowledge of Prakruti helps in deciding line of management, drug doses, prognosis, wholesome and unwholesome foods. In nut shell it can be stated that with all the external factors affecting body, mind and soul the human body, mind and soul try to adjust according to the environment and maintain a state of dynamic equilibrium. The knowledge of Prakruti thus helps a person to decide what to opt to remain healthy.

REFERENCES


