

**CONCEPT OF PRAKRITI: AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW****Dr. Durgesh Gupta*¹, Dr. Anurag Pandey², Prof. A. C. Kar³**¹JR-iii, Department of Vikriti Vigyan, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India²Assistant Professor, Department of Vikriti Vigyan, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India.³Professor, Department of Vikriti Vigyan, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India.Article Received on
27 June 2015,Revised on 21 July 2015,
Accepted on 06 Aug 2015***Correspondence for
Author****Dr. Durgesh Gupta**JR-iii, Department of
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Ayurveda, IMS, BHU,
Varanasi, India**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda has a holistic approach and includes all the factors which are accessory in the determination of health. According to Ayurveda the psychosomatic constitution, as also known as *Deha Prakriti*, is represented by a description of the Physique, Physiology & psychological make-up of an individual. The *Deha Prakriti* is essentially genetically determined and is likely to be influenced by a variety of environmental factors to some extent. *Prakriti* is one of the most important concepts and decided at the time of conception. *Prakriti* can be defined as body constitution. In this article derivation of prakriti, formation, factor affecting the development of prakriti, types of prakriti will be described.

KEYWORDS: *Prakriti, doshas, tri-gunas*, psychosomatic constitution.**INTRODUCTION**

The word *Prakriti* is derived from *Pra + Kriti* (to create or to act). *Pra* means the "beginning", "commencement" or "source of origin" and *kriti* means "to perform" or "to form". Put together *prakriti* means "natural form" or "original form" or "original source". Disease occurs when there is a change in this original form at the psychological or physiological level. In *vedic* literature (*Brahmana & Upanishada*) *prakriti* is used for meaning like *Swabhava, Sharira, Utpatti* etc. Ayurveda says each & every individual is unique. Their size and shape are different, even physiological and psychological characters are also different. This is because they have predominant *pancha-mahabhutas, doshas (vata, pitta & kapha), tri-gunas (satva, raja & tama)* at the time of birth which decides their

constitution. Once this constitution is set, it is permanent for that individual. These individualistic features are the manifestation of *prakriti*. In Ayurveda, *prakriti* represents the traits appearing at the time of union of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum). *Prakriti* in reference to the present study has been used with meaning *Swabhava* or nature of the individual, which covers the physical, social, mental and spiritual characteristics of life. Qualitative and quantitative, unchangeable *dosika* predominance from birth to death is called as *prakriti*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Literary material related to obesity has been collected from Several Ayurvedic texts like Charaka samhita, Sushrut samhita, Ashtang Sangraham, etc. *Prakriti* has two aspects, first one is genetic aspect and another one is acquired aspect. The factors affecting genetic aspect are *shukra* and *shonita*. While acquired aspect develops in relation to environmental factors like climate, season, time factor, age, race, familial inheritance. *Prakriti* can never be changed throughout life. Due to these factors different types of *prakriti* have been described.

FORMATION OF PRAKRITI

Prakriti is formed by the *Utkatata* (predominance) of one, two or all three *doshas* at the time of union of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) in the *garbhashaya* (uterus).^[1] For example, at time of birth if *vata* dosha is predominant as compare to *pitta* and *kapha*, then individual is having *vatajaprakriti*. Predominant *vata* dosha affect anatomy, physiology, psychology & immunity of that person. Features are seen according to properties & functions of *vata* dosha.

Shushruta has explained that: ‘the insect born in the poison does not die due to its own poison similarly *dosha* that is dominant according to one’s *prakriti* does not harm the individual.’^[2]

FACTORS AFFECTING THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRAKRITI

In Ayurvedic literature there is description of many factors which take part in formation and development of *prakriti* which can be broadly grouped into two i.e. Pre-natal (Intra uterine) factors and Post-natal (Extra uterine) factors. According to *Charak* and *Vagbhata*, *prakriti* of an individual depends on *Shukraprakriti* (sperm), *Shonitaprakriti* (ovum), *Kala prakriti* (time or season), *Garbhashayaprakriti* (condition of uterus), *Maturahar-viharprakriti* (diet and behaviour of mother) and *Mahabhutavikar prakriti*.^[3] These six factors come under the first group i.e Pre-natal factors. *Charaka* and *Vagbhata* have also described some other factors which plays important role in *prakriti* determination these factors are; *jatiprasakta* (racial

peculiarities), *kulaprasakta*(familial predisposition), *deshanupatini*(demographic), *kalanupatini*(seasonal effect), *vayonupatini*(natural changes according to age), *pratyatmaniyata* (personal habits and individuality, idiosyncrasy).^[4,5] All these six factors come under second group i.e. Post natal factors. The first group of factors acts during the intrauterine life of the foetus, at the time of the union of the *Shukra, Shonita and Jiva*. As they have definite role in the establishment of *Prakriti* and active before natal period, so they are termed as Pre-natal factors. While the second group of factors influence the *Prakriti* after the delivery of the foetus and is responsible for the development of the *Prakriti*, so they are termed as Post-natal factors.

TYPES OF PRAKRITI

In Ayurvedic texts many types of classification has been described for *prakriti*. These are as follows.

1. *Doshaja/DehaPrakriti*
2. *ManasaPrakriti*
3. *BhautikaPrakriti*
4. *JatyadiPrakriti*

Doshaja or DehaPrakriti

Doshaja prakriti is also known as *Deha Prakriti/Sharirika Prakriti*. There are seven types of *doshaja prakriti* described in Ayurveda on the basis of predominance of one or more *doshas*. *Vatala, Pittala and Shleshmala* are *ekadoshaja* i.e. due to the predominance of one *dosha*. *Vata-Pittala, Vata-Shleshmala* and *Pitta-Shleshmala* are *dvidoshaja* i.e. due to the predominance of two *doshas*. *Sama-prakriti* occurs due to the predominance of all three *doshas*.^[5] According to *Vagbhata*, individuals of *SamaPrakriti* are excellent while mixed *Prakriti* are disapprove. The person of *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha* predominance are said to be inferior, average and good respectively.

ManasaPrakriti

On the basis of *triguna*, there are three types of *manasa prakriti*. *Satvaja, Raja* and *Tama*. These three types of *manasa prakriti* further divided into sixteen types. *Brahma, Mahendra, Varun, Kaubera, Gandharva, Yamy* and *Rishi Sattva* are comes under *satvajamanasa prakriti*. *Asura, Rakshasa, Paishacha, Preta, Sarpa and Shakuna* are included in *rajasamanasa prakriti*. *Pashava, Matsya* and *Vanaspatya* are the subtypes of

tamasamanasaprakriti. Acharya Kashyap described two additional *manasaprakriti*, one is *Prajapatya* under *satvajagroup* and another one is *Yaksha* under *rajasagroup*.

BhautikaPrakriti

Sushruta has also described five types of *Prakriti* according to the dominance of *PanchMahabhutas*^[6] called *BhautikaPrakriti*. These are.

1. *Parthiva* due to the predominance of *PrithviMahabhuta*.
2. *Apya* due to the predominance of *JalaMahabhuta*.
3. *Taijas* due to the predominance of *Agni Mahabhuta*.
4. *Vayaviya* due to the predominance of *VayuMahabhuta*.
5. *Akashiyadue* to the pre dominance of *AkashaMahabhuta*.

JatyadiPrakriti

AcharyaCharaka described six types of *jatyadiprakriti in Indriyasthanas*.^[7] These are:

1. *Jatiprasakta*(racial peculiarities)
2. *Kulaprasakta* (familial predisposition)
3. *Deshanupatini* (demographic)
4. *Kalanupatini* (Seasonal effect)
5. *Vayonupatini*(natural changes according to age)
6. *Pratyatmaniyata* (personal habits & individuality, idiosyncrasy)

In *Ashtangasangraha*, all these are described as factors influencing the formation of *prakriti*.^[8]

CHARACTERISTICS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF DEHA PRAKRITI

Acharya Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhatta, Sharangadhara, Bhela, Harita, Yogaratnakara have described the characteristics of different types of *Deha Prakriti*.^[9, 10, 11,12,13,14]

QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF PRAKRITI

According to *Acharya Charaka* the *ekadoshajaprakriti* are rare. The persons having *ekdoshajaprakriti* is always prone to be sick while persons having *samdoshajaprakriti* is healthy. Among all types of *doshajaprakriti*, *samdoshajaprakriti* is the best but found rarely. *Dvidoshajaprakriti* is *nindniya* or bad. Out of this *pitta-kaphaja* is bad, *vata-kaphaja* is worse and *vata-pittaja* is worst. *Ekdoshajaprakriti* is better. Out of this *vataprakriti* is good, *pitta prakriti* is better and *kaphaprakriti* is best. *Vagbhata* has mentioned that the person having *vata, pitta* and *kaphapredominance* are said to be inferior, average and superior respectively.

CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF *PRAKRITI* ASSESSMENT

Prakriti has prime importance in both healthy and diseased persons. *Prakritipariksha* is the component of *Dashavidhpariksha*.^[15] The clinical and therapeutic utility of the knowledge of *prakriti* has been vibrantly described by the *Charaka*, where the detailed regimen that is to be followed by different *dosajaprakriti* individuals and treatment according to predominance of *doshas* is mentioned.^[16] *Prakriti* is not changeable; if it changes it indicates death of an individual within six months. *Prakriti* has prime importance in both healthy and diseased persons i.e., importance of *prakriti* in prescribing dietary regimen and life style management in healthy individuals and treatment point of view in diseased individuals.

By understanding the individual constitution of every individual, we know which food, drink, exercise etc. are appropriate for maintaining their health. If the daily activities, diet, occupation and behaviour are not adjusted to balance this.

Study of *Prakriti* will help clinician in the following respects.

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

Prakriti and *Sattva Pariksha* (investigations) have been included in ten fold investigation methods i.e. *Dashavidha-Atura-Pariksha* in Ayurveda. The particular type of psychosomatic constitution with specific *Dosik* constituents predisposes a particular individual to a particular type of illness. In view of this fact, the different diseases to which an individual is predisposed may be prevented or postponed by appropriate diet, drugs or regimen. This is in this context, that Ayurveda advocates extensive preventive measures in terms of *SwasthaVritta*, *Sadvritta*, *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya* etc. The observations showing greater incidence of certain diseases in which the patients of certain *prakriti* are predisposed, support the fact showing greater susceptibility of *Vatika* individuals to anxiety neurosis, thyrotoxicosis, peptic ulcer and tuberculosis, *Paittik* individuals to hypertension, peptic ulcer, bronchial asthma and rheumatoid arthritis and *Kaphaja* individuals to diabetes mellitus, obesity, osteoarthritis, hypertension, and ischaemic heart diseases.

DISSCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The interpretation of *prakriti* in *Charaka* is more systematic than other *Samhitas*. *Charaka* has emphasised more on the physical characteristic as compare to psychological traits. In *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* the characteristics of *prakriti* are described in terms of nature of other animals and description of dreams, which are not described in *CharakaSamhita*. *Prakriti* has prime importance in both healthy and diseased persons. By understanding the individual constitution of every individual, we know which food, drink, exercise etc. are appropriate for maintaining their health

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