

Dosha Dhatu Mala Moolam Hi Shareeram

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Abstract: Ayurveda emphasizes on certain distinct concepts-Panchamahabhuta, Tridosha, Saptadhatu, Trimala, Prakriti-which makes the science peculiar. The Panchamahabhuta theory describes that the entire universe is made up of five elements; namely-Prthvi, Ap, Tejas, Vayu and Akasha, and these Panchamahabhutas are believed to form the three basic humors of human body-Vata, Pitta and Kapha-which paves the way to the Tridosha Siddhanta. Apart from the Doshas, the other significant notions mentioned are the Saptadhatu-Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Medas, Asthi, Majja, Shukra; and Trimala-Mutra, Purisha, Sweda. The equilibrium of Tridosha, Saptadhatu, and Trimala forms the foundation of Ayurveda's fundamental theory. For a healthy state, the balance between the three Doshas and other factors should be maintained. Any disparity between these, causes a state of illness or disease.

Keywords: Dosha, Dhatu, Mala, Panchamahabhuta

1. Introduction

Dosha dhatu mala moolam hi shareeram ||

Sharira is the human body. *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala* are the three major categories into which the various bodily components are divided. The root causes of a living body are *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. In a living body, their typical functions maintain homeostasis. It's crucial that *Dosha-Dhatu-Mala* stay within physiological bounds and it is unhealthy to go above this limit on any side. These three entities are compared to the roots of a plant or tree by Dalhana, the Commentator of *Sushruta Samhita*.

Yatha vrukshaadeenam sambhavasthithipralayeshu moolam pradhaanam, tatha shareerasya vaataadaya ityatha ||

Similar to how roots are necessary for a plant's origin, sustenance, and death, the same way these entities-*Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*-are necessary for a person's genesis and sustenance of life, as well as their destruction. Here in the above verse, these three entities are compared by Dalhana to the roots of a plant. It implies that roots are to plants, what *dosha-dhatu-mala* are to living organisms. It is well recognized that roots are absolutely necessary for the survival of plants. The first thing to sprout at initially is the root. Therefore, it is crucial in the beginning of life. In the life of a human, *Dosha* first appears. They are therefore crucial for the development of the human body because they are in charge of growing the unicellular zygote. They keep control on the formation of seven *Dhatu* and *Mala*, which take part in the process of organogenesis. Together these entities form the human body. Later in the stage of sustenance as well as destruction also, all these entities play an important role.

Ayurveda has considered that the balanced state of *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala* leads to state of health and their imbalanced state produces disease.¹ All the functions of the body could be explained in terms of *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. This state of Equilibrium is not only preserved by the specified number, but also the quality (functional state) of such variables, i.e. *Dosha, Mala* and *Dhatu*.² The state of health has been defined as the presence of equilibrium in activities

of *Dosha, Agni, Dhatu, Mala* and calm and pleasant state of soul, sense organ and mind.³ Acharya Vagbhata has been stated that *Doshasamyam Arogyata*⁴ and Acharya Charaka inscribed "Vikaro Dhatu Vaishamyam",⁵ while describing the health and disease.

TRIDOSHA

The *Tridosha* theory in Ayurveda has been said to have derived from the theory of the three elements of the universe. All physiological and biological functions of human body are regulated by the *Tridosha-Vata, Pitta, Kapha*-corresponding to the three elements of the universe: Air, Fire and Water. A human, being stable and unhealthy state depends on the usual and abnormal functional state of the person.

Dosha can be defined as:

- Dooshayantiiti Dosha*/those which vitiate the other substances after getting themselves vitiated.
- Dustingatva Vyadhim Janayanti Iti Dosha* / those which produce disease when vitiated.⁶
- Prakriti Janakatvey Sati Swatantryena Dusti Kartritvam Dosatvam* / Those which give rise to a specific temperament by birth and which can produce disease independently i.e. primarily. It is mentioned by Pandit Hirlekar Shastri in his *Sareeram Tatwa Darshanam*, that *Doshas* are "Saktiroopa Dravyas". In fact, all the *Doshas, Dhatus*, and *Malas* act as *Dhatus* in certain conditions or *Dosha* and *Malas* in certain conditions. The so called *Doshas* in their normalcy act as *Dhatus*. In the same way the so called *Dhatus* and *Malas* also act as *Dosha* and *Malas* in their vitiated states.⁷

The word *Vata* is originated from "Va" *Dhatu* which means *Gati / Gandhana*. The *Gati arthaka dhatu* gives 3 meanings *Gati* (means movement), *Gnana* (grasping the knowledge) and *Prapti* (reaching or achieving). *Gandhana* implies *Utsaha* (enthusiasm for doing the works), *Prakasa* (expression), *Soochana* (taking towards), *Himsa* (leading to destruction). The word *Pitta* is originated from "Tap" *Dhatu* which means *Santapa* (for *Paka* and *Sara kittavibhajana*), *Daha* (*Dahana karma* leading to *Parinama*), *Aishwarya* (the prosperity). The word *Kapha* is originated from the "Shilsh" *Dhatu* which implies the functions like *Shleshana* or *Poshana*.⁸

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Vata is the primal constituent of the living body, composed by *Akasha* and *Vayu*⁹ *Mahabhuta* and whose function is Rajasic.¹⁰ It relates to the development of such systems that are somatic and psychic. The existence of *Vata* is therefore to be inferred in such mental phenomenon as the show of excitement, which is primarily Rajasic or dynamic in nature, emphasis etc. It upholds all the supporting constituents and their due circulation throughout the body.¹¹ *Pitta* is that primal constituent of the living body, composed by *Tejas*¹² *Mahabhuta* and whose function is Satvic¹³ as the development of those physical ones is concerned with and mental structures which in nature are primarily Satvic (balancing and transformative). *Kapha* is that primal constituent of the living body whose structure is composed by *Apa* and *Prithvi*¹⁴ *Mahabhuta* and whose function is Tamasic,¹⁵ as it is of importance with the development of those physical and mental procedures, which are primarily in nature, Tamasic (conserving and stabilizing). And hence plays the important role in maintaining health of the body. The development, transformation & wellness and deterioration of the human body is carried out by the combined actions of the *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* starting from birth till death, not leaving a single cell of the body.¹⁶

SAPTADHATU

The word *Dhatu* is derived from the word root “*Dha*” by adding suffix “*Tun*”. The word’s origin gives it the connotation of something which sustains and nourishes. In general, the *Sanskrit* word often refers to component, constituent, elementary substance, verbal, grammatical root or a metal.

Sapta means seven and *Dhatu* means that which carries or supports. Seven vital tissues, according to *Ayurveda*, are that provide nourishment, growth, and structure to the entire body. These tissues are called dhatus which are in many aspects resemble to the major tissues identified by Modern Science. They are maintained within limit of the skin from outside and mucus membrane from inside. They give the body support, strength and structure. Each dhatu’s ultimate “essence” is called *Ojas*. The most effective method to improve the health of the dhatus is to increase *Ojas*. On the other hand, improper diet and digestion will lead to an a formation in each tissue layer. Disequilibrium of *Dhatu* is disease and their equilibrium is health. Health is termed as happiness, while disorder as unhappiness.¹⁷ In a state of equilibrium of *Dhatu*, diseases are prevented, tissue elements develop properly and ageing process slows down.¹⁸

The *Dhatu* are formed from first transformed food into nutrient fluid called *Ahararasa* (*Prasada*). This *Ahara rasa* nourishes body components in a sequential pattern. It first nourishes the *Rasa dhatu*, then *Rakta*, then *Mamsa* etc. The nutrients present in the food nourish respective dhatu qualitatively and quantitatively.¹⁹ Furthermore, during the process of metabolism, *Dhatu* undergo a specific pathway through their own characteristic digestive enzymes termed as, *Dhatvagni*. In this process, each *Dhatu* gets converted into two parts: *Poshya* (which nourishes itself) and *Poshaka* (which nourishes others). The *Poshya* fraction is responsible for *Dhatu*’s own nourishment and functions. The *Poshaka* fraction nourishes further other *Dhatus*. By-products (*Upadhatu*) and waste products (*Mala*) are also formed in

this *Dhatu* metabolic process. Thus, each *Dhatu* nourishes its next sequential *Dhatu*.²⁰ The major functions of seven dhatus are listed as nourishment (*preenana*), vitalizing (*jeevana*), covering (*Lepa*), moistening (*Snehana*), supporting (*Dharana*), filling (*Poorana*), and reproduction (*Garbhoptpadana*) respectively.²¹

Trimala

Mala-*Malinikaranathmalah*-the word *mala* means which cause intoxication. *Ayurveda* generally recognizes two kinds of *malas*: *Ahara mala* or wastes from food & *Dhatu mala* or wastes from the tissues. Digesting and eliminating whatever we put in our bodies is referred to as *Ahara Mala*, the three primary *malas* being *Purisa* (feces), *Mutra* (urine) and *Sweda* (sweat). In normalcy they sustain health but same when gets contaminated can be hazardous to health. Although these are all waste products, they serve a role in maintaining health as long as they are normal in their quantity (*Pramana*), qualities (*Gunas*) and function (*Karma*). However, if the *Malas* become abnormal in some regard (i.e. increased or decreased) they become a factor in creating disease. When the *Dhatus* and *Malas* become unbalanced they are called *Dushyas*.²² According to *Ayurveda* only a balanced condition of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* (waste) is *Aarogya* (good health or disease free condition), and their imbalance causes ill health or disease. Balanced *Doshas*, healthy *Agni*, a good state of tissues and their metabolic end-products lead to a balanced state of the senses, mind and spirit, all of which lead to health. *Malas* (bodily wastes) help maintain the functioning of our organs.²³ An imbalance of the elements in the body causes abnormality in quality or quantity of the *malas* (waste), thus leading to diseases. For example: An increase in *Purisha* (feces), composed mainly of the element *bhoomi* (earth), causes abdominal unrest. Any decrease in *Purisha* (feces), can lead to bloating, abdominal pain, back pain, asthma, hypocalcaemia etc. *Mutra* or urine is composed mainly of *jal* (water) and *agni* (fire). Any increase can cause infections to urinary tract and bladder dysfunction. Reduced urine production can cause kidney stones. *Sveda* or sweat is composed mainly of *jal* (water). Increased sweating can cause dehydration, lowered body temperature, fungus attack on skin, body odour etc. Decreased sweating can lead to dry skin and high body temperature.²⁴

2. Discussion

“*Samadosha Samagnischa Samadhatu Malakriyah Prasannatma Indriya Mana Swastha Ityabhidhiyate.*”

Ayurveda characterizes health as a complete four dimensional status of bio-equilibrium (*Tridosha*, *Agni*, *Saptadhatu*, *Trimala*) and psycho-spiritual wellbeing of delightful state (*Atma*, *Indriya*, *Mana*). Their imbalance is the cause of disease or ill health. Their balance is disturbed by irregular lifestyle, prolonged physical and mental stress, wrong dietary habits, incompatible foods, misuse of senses. *Dhatus* described in *Ayurveda* are the various organs and parts of our body. They are *Rasa* (Plasma), *Rakta* (Blood), *Mamsa* (Muscles), *Meda* (Fatty tissue), *Asthi* (Bones), *Majja* (bone marrow), *Shukra* (Semen and Reproductive tissue). *Mala* represents the byproducts resulting from the physiological and metabolic activities going inside the

human body. *Malas* (waste products) forms the essential and basic components which support the vital functions of the human body. *Ayurveda* believes that diseases or illnesses can also be caused by imbalances in the waste removal systems of the body. The body primarily produces three types of waste products or *malas*, which are together known as *Trimala*. These are *Purisha* (feces)-which is solid waste or balance of digestive fire; *Mutra* (urine) and *Sweda* (sweat or water balance)-which are liquid wastes. The production and removal of these wastes in a channeled way is absolutely necessary and vital to maintain a healthy body and mind.²⁵

3. Conclusion

Ayurveda, being the heritage of health care and a way of life, fortunately, has propagated various principles, in order to maintain health and treat diseases. Normal functions of living organism are human physiology and when there is disturbance of human physiology, there pathology occurs. The *Ayurveda* physiology emphasizes on *Tridosha*, *Saptadhatu* & *Trimala* mainly. *Tridosha* maintain the integrity and support human body, as the pillars support a dwelling house. *Saptadhatu* compose the structural architecture of the body. They support and nourish the body tissues. *Trimala* are form in different stages of metabolism and demanding clearance or purification. Balance of certain amount of waste products are desirable, but when accumulated lead to many pathological conditions. So in short the equilibrium of these entities maintain health and the disequilibrium could bring dissolution of the body.²⁶

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