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PRAKRITI ANALYSIS AND ITS IMPORTANCE'S & CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN AYURVEDIC CLASSICS

Dr. Namrata Sahu*1, Dr. Vinay Bhardwaj2 and Dr. Gitanjali Sasmal3

¹Post Graduate Scholar, ²Reader, ³Reader & HOD. Department of Kriya Sharira.

P.G. Department of Kriya Sharira, Shri NPA Govt. Ayurved College, Raipur, C.G., India.

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*Corresponding Author Dr. Namrata Sahu

Post Graduate Scholar, P.G. Department of Kriya Sharira, Shri NPA Govt Ayurved College, Raipur, C.G., India.

ABSTRACT

Prakriti, an important concept of Ayurveda, is a combination of physical, physiological, psychological characteristics. The Prakriti of individual is determined by Doshika predominance at the time of union of Shukra (semen) and Shonita (ovum) & also influenced by some other factors like Kala-Garbhashaya Prakriti, Matura ahara-vihara Prakriti, Mahabhuta-vikara Prakriti and other factors like Jatyadi Prakriti (Jati, Kula, Desa, Kala, Vaya, Pratyatmaniyata). For example, at the time of union of gamets, if Vata dosha is predominant as compared to Pitta and Kapha then the individual is distinguished as Vataja Prakriti and such individual possesses the physical, physiological and psychic (mental) characters according to

predominance of *Vata dosha*. So *Prakriti* refers to genetically determined anatomical, physiological and psychological constitution of an individual. *Prakriti* also determines the response of an individual to environmental factors, drugs and susceptibility to diseases making it one of the earliest known concepts of preventive and personalized or genomic medicine. So *Prakriti* emphasizes on the individuality and plays an important role in diagnosis, preventive medicine, and therapeutics. For maintenance of health, every person should know his or her *Prakriti*. If proper care is not taken then predominance of any *Dosha* may lead to certain diseases. For example, If *Vata Prakriti purusha* has taken more *Vatika Ahara-Vihara* in *Vata vardhak kala* then he or she may suffer from *Vataja vyadhis*. *Prakriti* is an important factor for making correct diagnosis of the diseases and their proper treatment.

KEYWORDS: Prakriti, Vikriti, Ahara-Vihara, Vata, Pitta, Kapha Dosha.

INTRODUCTION

The term *Prakriti* is derived from two Sanskrit words '*Pra*' and '*Kri*'. '*Pra*' means 'First' and the '*Kri*' means 'Creation'. So *Prakriti* is termed as the 'first creation'. The term *Prakriti* also means 'nature' or state of an individual in its natural form. Ayurveda considers *Panchamahabhuta* (*Aakasha*, *Vayu*, *Teja*, *Jala* and *Prithvi*) to be the basic constituents of this physical universe including the human body. These *Mahabhuta* manifests into *Tridosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*). Though all three *Dosha* exist in every human being, one is dominant based on which an individual's *Prakriti* is determined. *Prakriti* are discrete phenotypes and they are determined on the basis of physical, psychological, physiological and behavioral traits, and are independent of social, ethnic and geographical variables. [1.2] *Prakriti* of human being depends on genetic and acquired factors. The genetic constitution depends upon *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum), while acquired constitution depends on environmental factors like age, race, heredity, climate, season, and region.

Prakriti is an important concept of Ayurveda that explains individuality. It expresses unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of *Dosha* right from birth. *Prakriti* makes every person unique therefore no two persons can be exactly identical. Anatomical, physiological and psychological characteristics differ from one person to other person depending on his/her *Prakriti*.

Prakriti remains constant for each individual throughout his/her lifetime. *Prakriti* formation of an individual According to *Acharya Sushruta*, formation of *Prakriti* takes place by the condition of *Tridosha* at the time of union of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) in the *Garbhashaya* (womb) of mother. Predominance of any one, two, or all the three *Dosha* (body humors- *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) determines the characteristics features of the future child as *Ekadoshaja Prakriti* (*Vataja*, *Pittaja* and *Kaphaja*), *Dvandvaja* (*Vatapitta*, *Vatakapha*, *Kaphapitta*), and *Samamishra* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* in equal proportions). [3]

According to *Acharya Charaka Panchamahabhuta* and *Chetana* (soul) unite to form *Purusha* and the nature of this *Sharira* is known as *Prakriti*.^[4]

Factors affecting formation of Prakriti^[5]

Factors which play direct or indirect role in the formation of *Prakriti* are as-*Prakriti* of an individual takes shape in the mother's womb at the time of conception, due to the dominance of *Doshas* in *Shukra*, and *Shonita*. According to *Shodashabhuta Siddhanta Shukra*, *Shonita*,

Rasa & Atma these four factors composes the Garbha. The Shukra and Shonita are derived from father and mother respectively. Hence these are named as paternal and maternal factors. The Rasa supplied by the mother fruits nutrition. Atma along with Manas and Buddhi enters in the uterus depending on the deeds of his or her previous life. The above-mentioned four factors come from different sources and get congregated to produce Garbha. These factors are composed of Mahabhutas, among them Akasha is Vibhu. So while transmigrating except Akasha, the other four Bhutas take part. Thus, totally sixteen factors come from different sources for the formation of embryo. Satmyaja and Satvaja factors also contribute to the constitution of different organs of the body.

Prakriti which is formed by the combination of parental and individual factors is genetic in origin and termed as *Garbhakalina Prakriti*. The *Prakriti* imbibed in an embryo is subjected to various environmental factors, which may also influence and make an alteration to form *Jatakalina Prakriti*.

While describing the *Prakriti*, *Charaka* has enumerated four factors responsible for its formation viz. [6-9]

- 1. Shukrashonita Prakriti (sperm and ovum)
- 2. Kalagarbhashaya Prakriti (time of conception or season & health status of uterus)
- 3. *Maturahara-Vihara Prakriti* (diet and lifestyle habits of mother)
- 4. Mahabhutavikara Prakriti

1. Shukra Shonita Prakriti

Shukra Shonita Prakriti is formed depending upon the characteristic of parents. To get better progeny, Ayurveda has suggested some treatment to eradicate the morbidity of Shukra and Artava.

2. Kaala Garbhasya Prakriti

This type of *Prakriti* is formed during the period of pregnancy depending upon the psychophysical condition of the mother only. It is paradoxical that act of fecundating only mother has to shoulder all the responsibilities for nine months. So any emotional strain experienced by mother will affect her baby. The *Kaala & Garbhashaya* are two factors *Prakriti* build up of child determined at this stage is known as *Kaala Garbhasya Prakriti*.

3. Matri Ahara-Vihara Prakriti

There is good reason to believe that any nourishment taken during pregnancy will be of great importance for the mother as well as for the child. Besides Aushadha (drugs) consumed during pregnancy may also influence (good or bad) the child. The Prakriti due to diet and mental behavior is known as Matri Ahara-Vihara Prakriti.

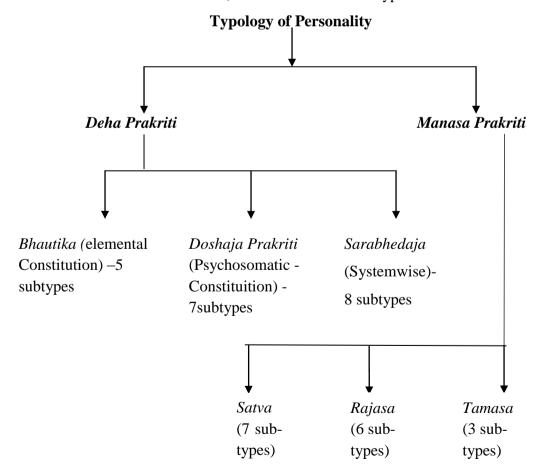
4. Mahabhuta Vikara Prakriti

According to Ayurveda, the Panchmahabhutas also play an important role in the formation of Prakriti. Now a days it is believed that the embryo is sensitive to sound, solar eclipse and heavy cyclone also can damage the child lying in the womb. Thus, repeated disturbance in the Mahabhuta characters which are necessary for building the body and nerve tissues may harm the child. This is known as Mahabhuta Vikara Prakriti.

Each of these has their own due effect not only on the shape or structure of the human body but also on the human behavior.

CLASSSIFICATION OF PRAKRITI IN GENERAL

With reference to the seat of *Prakriti*, it is divided two main types:



Prakriti Assessment

Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata and other Samhitas describe guidelines for Prakriti assessment. Characters of Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti are described in detail based on which physician examines dominance of Vata, Pitta and Kapha. These characters can be divided into anatomical, Physiological, Psychological & Behavioural variables.

Charaka explains assessment of Prakriti based on Guna and describes manifestation of each Guna separately. For example, Vata Prakriti is illustrated on the basis of Ruksha, Laghu, Chala, Sheeghra, Sheeta, Purusha, Vishada, Alpa Guna. Each Guna is responsible for specific characteristics. Sushruta, Vagbhata, Harita, Bhavamishra and Sharangdhara describe Prakriti based on anatomical, physiological and psychological characters. Sushruta and Vagbhata (Samgraha and Hridaya) have added numerous objective parameters as: cracked legs and developed calf muscles of Vata Prakriti, coppery hair and laxity of joints for Pitta Prakriti, long arm, broad chest and muscular body of Kapha Prakriti. Dreams, liking and disliking of different Prakriti have elucidated by other Samhita. Sharangdhara has listed few parameters for quick assessment of Prakriti.

Sushruta and Vagbhata linked Prakriti with some animals or birds based on similarity of their characters. This similarity is termed as Anukatva and explained as Vata Prakriti personality analogous to goat, jackal, dog etc; Pitta Prakriti similar to cobra, owl, cat etc. and Kapha Prakriti resembles swan, elephant, lion etc.

Apart from these characters; history, compatibility, proneness, lifestyle, diet and other aspects are considered with structured clinical examination. Role of lifestyle, occupation and many other causative factors requires appropriate credit. Thus, *Prakriti* is retrospective evaluation of *Guna* based on clinical examination of an individual.

PRAKRITI ANALYSIS FORM[10]

Characteristics	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Physical Features			
General	Not beautiful, Dry, Emaciated	Soft	Pleasant appearance
appearance			T 11.1 '14 4 1
Build	Tall, thin, poorly built, parts of the body not well placed, dry, rough, weak	Delicate, medium built, flabby, medium strength, soft	Large, well built, steady, strong, proportionate, well placed parts of the body
Look	Unsteady, Unpleasant	Penetrating, angry look	Loving, pleasant
Voice	Rough, high pitched,	Clear, high pithed	Deep, pleasant resonating

	unclear, monotonous, week, low toned, split,		
	exhausted, fast speech		
Color	Dark	White complexion with reddish or yellowish tinge	Fair and lustrous
Gait and speed	Fast gait, fast speed, camel – like	Average speed like tiger	Slow and steady, elephant- like
Forehead, shoulder, chest	Small	Medium	Large, fleshy
Eyes	Unsteady, dry, neurotic, burning, round, rough, smoky iris, lusterless, eyes remain partially open during sleep, reddish, sunken	Normal movements, small, pink sclera, yellowish iris, unable to bear light, burning sensation	Unctuous, white sclera, big eyes, dull, lack of luster, pink conjunctiva, watery and well differentiated sclera and iris
Eyelashes	Thin, scanty and dry	Thin, scanty	Long, oily
Teeth	Dry, rough, small, gritting of teeth	White	Shiny, oily
Tongue	Dry, cracked, cold, rough	Red, dark	White, slimy
Mouth	Dry	Stomatitis, red palate, tongue and lip bitter, pungent taste in mouth	Excessive salivation, sweet taste
Lips	Rough, Dark, irregular, cracked, thin	Soft, thin, reddish in color	Oily, flat, soft, regular
Gums	Dark, rough	Soft, reddish, long	Pinkish (white-yellowish)
Face	Rough	Delicate	Delicate and pleasing
Limbs	Thin, rough, well differentiated not well placed in relation to each other	Red palms and soles	Long unctuous smooth limbs
Veins, tendons, lines on soles	Prominent, unclear	Not prominent	Well covered
Abdomen, muscles and joints	Sunken, poorly built	Moderately developed	Bulging, flabby, bulky
Weight	Light	Medium	Heavy
Joint	Not well developed	Soft, loose ligament of joints	Strong, well organized ligament and joints, joints deep and well placed
Skin	Dry, rough, thin, cracked, prominent veins	Soft, thin, warm, wrinkled skin with pink, reddish, lots of moles and skin eruptions	Soft, luster, wet, cold skin
Forehead	Small (less than 4 Anguli)	Medium, wrinkled	Large (greater than 4 Anguli)
Hair	Dry, rough, thin, cracked, smoky, less in	Early graying of hair, baldness, pinkish or	Strong, dark, long, dark blue, thick growth, good

	number	reddish, soft thin hair	quality
N-21-	Dry, small, rough,		Soft, oily, smooth, white
Nails	discolored, cracked	Pinkish	and steady
Physiological Feat	tures	•	
Appetite	Irregular, eating small	Good, eating large	Less appetite
Appente	quantities frequently	quantity food	Less appetite
Taste in mouth	Astringent	Bitter or sour	Sweet
Thirst	Thirsty	Thirsty	Less thirsty
Agni	Vishmagni	Tikshagni	Mandagni
Desire to eat	Hot and oily	Cold	Hot and dry
Sleep	Less, disturbed	Moderate	Sleepy, love sleep
	Wanders in sky, tops of	Electricity, water, wind,	Lotus, swan, water, birds,
Dreams	trees, mountains and dry	stars, red color, leaves	lakes etc.
	places	and trees	
Pulse	Thready, fast	Warm, fast	Slow, heavy
Bowels	Constipation	Large quantity of stool,	Normal
2011013	Consupation	tendency for diarrhea	1.0111mi
Urine	Less, Fast	Profuse and foully	Samanya
	,	smell	•
Perspiration	Less	Excessive	Less
Menstrual flow,		Profuse, red and foul	
smell	Scanty and dark flow	smell of the body,	Moderate flow
-		sweat and mouth also	
Strength	Weak	Moderate	Strong
	Unsteady fast		Slow movements, slow
Activities	movements, gait is quick	Fast, Limited	activities, steady, heavy
D	and fast, likes to wander		, ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,
Beginning of an	Quick	Medium	Slow
activity	Moderate	Madagata	Engagetic
Energy	Moderate	Moderate	Energetic
Shivering,	Present	Absent	Absent
tremor Sex desire	Weak	Weak sex urge	Intanca say urga
Sex desire Semen	Scanty		Intense sex urge Profuse
Libido	Less	Scanty Limited	Good
Children	Few Children	Few Children	Many Children
Cimufell	Low, Suffering from	Medium, Suffering	High, Suffering from
Immunity	Vata disorder	from Pitta disorder	Kapha disorder
Pshycological Fea		110111 1 III UISOIUCI	rapha disorder
Luck & fortune	Unlucky & unfortunate	Unlucky	Lucky & fortunate
Character &			
conduct	Uncultured	Good conduct	Cultured
Truthfulness	Absent	Absent	Truthful, trustworthy
Quarrelsome	Quarrelsome	Quarrelsome	Calm
Gratitude	Ungrateful	Often grateful	Grateful
Stealing	Stealing	Stealing	Absent
		Kind only to friendly	
Kindness	Harsh to people	people	Kind
Helping attitude	Absent	Helping those who ask	Helping nature
	- ~		-ro

		to help	
Desires and like	Music, laughter, hunting, arts, hot humid climate, massage	Flowers, application of pastes, cold environment	Scientific & philosophical literature, sleep, music, warm environment, warm food items
Irritability	Gets quickly excited	quickly excited	Calm, not crying excessively even in infancy
Anger	Gets quickly angry	Gets angry quickly and in excess	Does not get angry quickly or of mild degree but lasts long
Jealousy	Jealous	Jealous of others	Absent
Greed	Greedy	Greedy	Absent
Fear	Fearful	Frightened quickly	Minimum
Happiness, moods	Changing mood	Gets happy quickly, changing moods	Steady mood, in general happy
Love	Fall a prey to sex instinct	Moderate control over sex urge	Fair control over sex urge
Speech	Incoherent speech, talkative	Insulting speech	Does not use harsh language, consistent and thoughtful speech
Shame	Shameless	-	Sense of shame present
Gentle	Harsh	Harsh	Gentle
Brave		Brave	
Conscience	Wavering conscience, lack of conscience	Follow to some extent dictates of his conscience	Follow dictates of his conscience
Control over mind	No control over mind	Fairly good control	Good control
Mind	Weak mind	Moderately strong mind	Strong mind with good qualities
Forgiving nature	Absent	Absent	Forgiving nature
Contentment	Not contented	Not contented	Contented
Tolerance	Absent	Absent	Tolerant
Aggressiveness	Aggressive, destructive, violent	Aggressive for those who have not surrendered, consoling people who have surrendered	Not aggressive
Theism	Atheism/ nonreligious	Usually few friends	Religious
Intellect	Wavering intellect, intellect not well organized	Intelligent, brilliant	Good intellect
Memory	Poor and wavering memory	Fair	Good memory
Thoughts	Wavering thoughts	Fairly steady thoughts	Steady thoughts
Concentration	Unsteady, inability to concentrate	Fairly steady, can concentrate fairly well	Steady mind, good concentration
Grasping power	Quick grasping power	-	Take long time to grasp

Knowledge	Poor	Moderate	Learned
Interest in philosophy and science	Less intrest	Learned	Interest in philosophy and science
Belief in authoritative texts	Cannot understand authoritative texts	Challenges authoritative texts	Firm belief in authoritative texts
Respect for teachers	No respect for teachers	Some respect	Respect for teachers
Devotion	Less		Fully Devoted
Plans	Short term plans	Short term plans	Long term plans, far sighted
Attention	Absent	Attentive on one subject at a time	Simultaneously attentive everywhere
Socio-economic Features			
Friendship	Having very few friends	very few friends	Many friends, Lasting friendship
Donation	Does not give donation	Does not give donation	Large donation after thinking well

Analysis: Score & percentage of Vata-.....

Score & percentage of Pitta-

Score & percentage of Kapha-.....

RESULT

Prakriti in health and diseases

Knowledge about *Prakriti* is prerequisite for assessment of *Vikriti* (pathology) hence it is reverse pathology and restores *Prakriti*.

Primary objective of *Prakriti* assessment is to estimate *Bala Pramana* and *Dosha Pramana* of an introduction. Bala Pramana refers to judgment of physical and psychological potential that illustrates status of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala* and related organs.

Diagnostic aspect and Prakriti

Prakriti forms basis for understanding Samprapti (pathology), and extent Vikalpana(combinations) of vitiated Dosha and status of host factors. Prediction of proneness and severity of disease can be speculated that helps in prognosis judgement.

Prakriti and Prognosis

Prakriti is important for judgement of prognosis. If Vikaara Prakriti (nature of disease) and Prakriti are similar then disease is difficult to manage (Kashta saadhya). When Prakriti and disease is of different origin, it is easy to manage (*Sukha saadhya*). *Kashyapa Samhita* has defined role of season (*Kaala Prakriti*) in relation *Prakriti*. If season, disease and *Prakriti* are of same *Dosha*, disease is untreatable and has bad prognosis. Any two of these if similar, make disease difficult to treat.

Role of Prakriti inTreatment

Though treatment design is based on multiple variables, *Prakriti* has a role in selection of drug, dose, *Anupaana* (vehicle) and *Samskaara* (processing). Considering *Prakriti* (coupled with other factors) some drugs or procedures are Indicated (*Ghrita* for *Vata* and *Pitta Prakriti*) or contraindicated (*Swedana* for *Pitta Prakriti*). *Prakriti* of an individual illustrates numerous physiological functions, as *Agni* (digestive and metabolic capacity), *Koshtha* (digestive and excretory functions), *Bala* (Strength of tissues) and lifespan are specific for each *Prakriti*.

Systematic objective clinical evaluation is essential for understanding of *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* assessment with other factors of *Dashavidha Pareeksha* should be contemplated for total understanding of patient or healthy individual.

Importance of *Prakriti*

- 1) **Promotion of Health:** Ayurveda encourages a person to take foods & indulge in those activities which are opposite to his/her *Prakriti* to live a healthy life style. The rejuvenative therapies like *Rasayana* and *Vajikarana* benefit most when they are administered according to one's *Prakriti*.
- 2) Agni status of individual: Acharya Charaka has mentioned four types of Agni (Digestive fire) according to one's Prakriti. [11]
- Vishmagni (Disturbed) in Vata Prakriti
- Tikshnagni (Increased) in Pitta Prakriti
- Mandagni (Decreased) in Kapha Prakriti
- Samagni (Normal) in Samadosha Prakriti
- 3) **Determination the** *Bala* (**Strength**) The Comparative strength of different individuals can be decided by the type of *Prakriti*. The *Kapha Prakriti* persons are stronger than *Pitta* and *Vata Prakriti* persons. Determination of strength is important while treating a person.
- **4)** Susceptibility to disease/Predictive Medicine: Each *Prakriti* type is prone to specific diseases. *Prakriti* determines proneness of an individual for *Dosha* specific diseases. For

- example, *Kapha Prakriti* persons are more prone to *Kaphaja vikara* like *Agnimandhya*, *Pratishyaya*, *Medoroga*, *Prameha* etc. similarly *Vata Prakriti* persons are more prone to *Gulma*, *Aaṭopa*, *Sandhigatavata* etc and *Pittaja Prakriti* persons are more prone to diseases like *Amlapitta*, *Pandu*, *Kaamla*, *Raktapitta* etc. [12]
- 5) **Diagnosis of diseases:** *Dashvidhapariksa* has been mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* while diagnosing the strength of the diseased person. *Prakriti* analysis is first one to be done while examining a patient.^[13]
- **6) Prognosis of diseases:** If the causative *Dosha* of an ailment is same as the *Prakriti* of the diseased person, the disease becomes *Krichrasadhya* i.e. difficult to cure. Similarly if the vitiated *Dosha* is different from one's *Prakriti*, it is very easy to treat.
- 7) Management of diseases/ Individualized Medicine
- 8) Acharya Charaka has mentioned 'Prati Purusha siddhanta' considering one's Prakriti and other factors specific to the diseased person while treating his/her ailment. The knowledge of Prakriti helps in drawing a line of treatment for diseased person. E.g. In Amajavyadhi like Jvara, for Kaphaja person one can adopt complete Apatarpana Chikitsa whereas in case of Vataja person that cannot be adopted completely. [14]
- **9) Determination of Drug doses** The dose of the medicine is decided according to one's *Prakriti*. In general the *Alpa* (minimum), *Madhya* (moderate) and *Pravara* (maximum) dose of medicine are adopted in *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha Prakriti* individuals respectively. [15]
- **10) Preventive Medicine-**In Ayurveda *Dinacharya* (Diurnal regime) and *Ritucharya* (Seasonal regimes) have been advised on the basis of *Prakriti*. The person can adopt these regimes as per need of *Prakriti* to keep body healthy and *Dosha* in equilibrium state. For example *Kapha Prakriti* persons need more exercise, *Laghuahara* to keep their body fit and they should avoid *Divasvapna*, whereas *Vata Prakriti* persons are advised to take nutritious and heavy food, do less exercise and can do *Divasvapna*.

CONCLUSION

The *Prakriti* of person is named according to the innate predominance of *Dosha* at the very time of conception. *Deha Prakriti* is the leading factor which determines the pattern of susceptibility of an individual to different *Rogas* (diseases), their prognosis, course and *Upadrava* (complications). Hence, the *Ayurvedic* concept of *Deha Prakriti* is helpful in maintaining health, understanding disease and its management. *Prakriti* also determines the response of an individual to environmental factors, drugs and susceptibility to diseases

making it one of the earliest known concepts of predictive, preventive and personalized or genomic medicine.

Applied Aspect of Prakriti

- Disease susceptibility or predictive medicine: *Prakriti* assessment aids in determining susceptibility to various diseases as well as preventing disease development from progression towards severity.
- Prophylaxis or preventive medicine: Prakriti determination aids in medicine's preventive element.
- Prognosis: In ancient Ayurvedic literature, the concept of curability or incurability of disease is described. It further depends on the individual's Prakriti. Disease prognosis is widely recorded in the text and is dependent on etiological factors, Dushya (pathology's substratum, Dhatu), causative Dosha, Dosha of physical constitution, onset, and place or habitat.
- Selection of individualized treatment modalities or correct therapeutic agent.
- Selection of correct dietary and lifestyle habits.

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