

## UTILITY OF VAYA AND AYU PARIKSHA ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

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### ABSTRACT

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The word *Ayurveda* comes from the *Sanskrit* root *Ayu* which means span of life. The purpose of examination of *Ayu* is to obtain knowledge regarding longevity, residual span of life in diseased person and rate of the mortality. The purpose of *Dashavidha Pariksha* is to obtain knowledge regarding *Dosha Bala* (*Vyadhi Bala*), *Bala* (*Rogibala*) and *Ayu* of the patient as described in *Charak Samhita*. Commonly *Ayu* and *Vaya* are regarded as synonyms but they are not similar terms. Hence, description of *Vaya* and *Ayu* is separately mentioned in *Charaka* as well as *Sushruta Samhita*. Description exclusively on *Ayu Pareeksha* described in *Charaka Viman Sthana*, *Charaka Chikitsasthana*, *Charaka Indriya Sthana* and *Charaka Shareer Sthana*. In *Indriya*

*Sthana*, *Ayu Pariksha* indicates the residual life-span of the diseased person. In *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ayu* is classified into three broad headings namely *Dirghayu*, *Madhyamayu* and *Alpayu* and explained the characteristic properties of all the three.

**KEYPOINTS:** *Dashavidha Pariksha*, *Vaya Pariksha*, *Ayu*, *Ayu Pariksha*.

### INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* is the medical science that deals with the life span of human beings along with the measures to cure and prevent the diseases. The word *Ayu* is derived from “*Ayussu*”. meaning life span, and *Veda* means knowledge. According to *Ayurveda*, “*Dirghayu*” or longevity means a complete balance in body, mind and soul associated with longevity, Without this

balance a person cannot enjoy the real benefit of longevity i.e., a state of permanent happiness and peace.

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः ।

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनः स्वस्थइत्यभिधीयते ॥ (सु.सू.15/48)

According to *Ayurveda*, there are four basic goals of human life namely, *Dharma* (religion), *Artha* (economy), *Kama* (sense pleasure) and *Moksha* (liberation). To practice and fulfill these basic goals of life one needs good health. The body is the vehicle on which one rides to their destination. If the body is weak or sick, one cannot function properly and is unable to achieve the goals of life. Therefore, for longevity, good health is important and for maintaining health, physician needs to examine *Ayu* from birth till death. *Ayurvedic* texts describe how to attain longevity and also mentioned verities of longevity through *Ayu Pariksha*. *Ayurveda* explains certain signs and symptoms to decide the life span of a patient. *Ayu Pariksha* has been broadly classified into three broad headings, namely, *Dirghayu*, *Madhyamayu* and *Alpayu* and these are described by *Sushruta*. He says that before prescribing any therapeutic procedure, physician should examine life span of the patients and if they have residual life span then his *Vyadhi* (disease), *Ritu* (season), *Agni* (digestive power), *Vaya* (age), *Deha* (body build), *Bala* (strength), *Sattva* (mind), *Satmya* (conducive factors), *Prakriti* (constitution), *Bhesaja* (drug) and *Desa* (habitat) should be examined. Tenfold examination are the tools described in *Charaka* to obtain knowledge regarding the span of life, strength and intensity of morbidity and these are *Prakriti* (constitution), *Vikriti* (morbidity), *Sara* (excellence of *Dhatus*), *Samhanana* (compactness of organs), *Pramana* (measurements of the organs of the body), *Satmya* (suitability), *Sattva* (psychic conditions), *Aahara Sakti* (power of intake and digestion of food), *Vyayama Sakti* (power of performing exercise) and *Vayas* (ageing). The basic purpose of these examinations is to understand the overall condition of the person in order to prescribe meticulous and systematically planned therapeutic treatment to get desirable and satisfying successful results. With a view to ascertaining the life span of an individual, symptoms described in *Charak Samhita Indriyasthanas*, and, also in the eighth chapter of *Shareer Sthana* must be taken in to account.

### The Difference Between *Ayu* and *Vaya*

वयस्तश्चेतत कालप्रमाणववशेषापेक्षिणी हि शरीरावस्था वयोऽभिधीयते। (च.वि.8/12).

*Vaya* is defined as the state of body corresponding to the length of time that has passed since

birth. *Vaya* (Age) is one of the medium to achieve the knowledge regarding *Ayu* (span of life) besides other tools. Both *Charaka* and *Sushruta* say that before prescribing any therapeutic procedures, physician should examine to obtain knowledge regarding the span of life, strength and intensity of morbidity.

#### Classification of *Vaya* according to different *Acharyas*

<i>Acharya</i>	<i>Bala</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>	<i>Vrddha</i>
CHARAKA	Upto 30 years <i>Aparipakvadhatu</i> – upto16 years <i>Vivardhamanadhatu</i> – upto30 Years	30 to 60 years	60 to 100 years
SUSHRUTHA	Upto 16 years <i>Kshirapa</i> - Upto 1 year <i>Kshirannada</i> - 1 to 2 years <i>Annada</i> - 2 to 16 years	16 to 70 years <i>Vrddhi</i> - 16 to 20 years <i>Yauvana</i> -20to 30 years <i>Sampurna</i> -30to40 years <i>Parihani</i> - 40to 70 years	after 70 years
VAGHBHATA	upto 16 years	16-70 years	after 70 years
VRDDHA VAGHBHATA	upto 16 years	16 – 60 years <i>Youvana</i> – 16-30 years <i>Sampoornata</i> –30-40 years <i>Parihani</i> – 40-60 years	after 60 years

#### Utility of *Vaya* for planning the treatment

In children and aged persons generally mild drugs and low doses are advised and many *Panchakarma* and surgical procedures such as *virechana*, *agni karma* and *kshara karma* are contraindicated and if very necessary then these procedures should be undertaken only under the supervision of an expert with all the precautions. Simultaneous administration of *rasayana* drugs while treating the age related problems may be helpful.

#### *Ayu Pariksha* (Examination of Life Span)

There are three varieties of *Ayu Pariksha* namely *Dirghayu*, *Madhyamayu* and *Alpayu* along with their characteristics are mentioned.

#### *Dirghayu* (Long life span)

The following criteria are useful to assess the long life span of the individual and these patients should be treated with all efforts. One who possesses big hands, feet, flanks, back, tip of the breasts, teeth, face, shoulders, forehead, long finger joints, expirations, eyes, arms, broad brows, space in between the breasts and broad chest; short calves, penis and neck; whose mind, voice and umbilicus are deep and breasts are not greatly elevated but are firm; whose ears and back of the head are well grown, big, hairy and body drying first from the

head after bath and anointing and the region of the heart later on.

### **Some other *lakshanas* of *Dirghayu***

Who has deep located bony joints, veins and ligaments, well developed body, steady sense organs, each succeeding division of the body (commencing from the feet to the head) better than its preceding is said to be having long span of life. He who has remained disease free even from his fetal life, growing slowly since then in body, common knowledge and special knowledge (of science, arts etc.) can be said, in brief, as one of long life.

### ***Madhyamayu* (Moderate life span)**

One who possesses mixed features of *Dirghayu* (having long span of life) is considered as *Madhyamayu* along with well manifest, broad, two, three or more lines below the *Aksa* (clavicles) and whose feet and ears are more muscular, tip of the nose is elevated and appearance of vertical lines on the back. These persons will survive for 70 years.

### ***Alpayu* (Short life span)**

One who possesses opposite of the *Dirghayu* (having long span of life) qualities should be understood as *Alpayu* (short span of life).

He who has short bony joints, big penis, chest having hairs appearing in circles (whirls), whose back not broad, ears and nose located slightly up (than their usual place), who exhibits his gum during laughing or talking and whose sight is unsteady – such a person lives for 25 years only.

## **CONCLUSION**

*Vaya pariksha* is an important factor for ascertaining proper diagnosis, prognosis of the disease and also for the proper treatment.

Fixation of (*matra*) dosage is dependent on age and also the body mass.

*Vaya pariksha* is an important factor and plays an vital role in the *shodana chikitsa*, *rasayana*, *vajikarana* etc.

Each diagnostic tool has its own limitations and in certain cases we may use newer tools to acquire knowledge to diagnose the disease.

*Ayurveda* is the traditional Indian medical system explains the measures to combat and

prevent the diseases along with ways to prevent the progress of diseases. *Ayu* means life span and *Veda* means knowledge. In a nut shell *Ayurveda* explains the ways to improve the longevity along with remedies to cure the diseases.

Verities of longevity along with their characteristic were mentioned under *Ayu Pariksha* and it is broadly classified into three broad headings namely *Dirghayu*, *Madhyamayu* and *Alpayu*, before prescribing any therapeutic procedures, physician should examine life span of the patients to treat various diseases and to explain mortality and morbidity of the diseases; on examination if they have long span of life then his *Vyadhi*, *Ritu*, *Agni*, *Vaya*, *Deha*, *Bala*, *Satva*, *Satmya*, *Prakriti*, *Bhesaja* and *Desa*. With a view to ascertain the life span of an individual, symptoms described in *Indriyasthan* and also in the eighth chapter of *Shareer Sthana* must be taken in to account. The aims and objectives of *Ayurveda* is to prolong the longevity of an individual's by adopting certain measures and diagnose clinically whether particular individual is surviving longer or not and accordingly administer strategies to enhance longevity, otherwise physician will get bad reputation in the society. Hence, knowledge of *Ayu* is important for gaining success, name and fame in the society by the physician.

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