

CONCEPT OF VYADHIKSHAMATVA IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

For prevention of diseases, Ayurveda had advocated the adherence to concepts like Dincharya, Ritucharya, Sadvritta, Na vega dharan etc. these measures are useful in preventing the lifestyle related diseases but for preventing the Aupsargik rogas (communicable diseases), Janpadodhwansa rogas (epidemic diseases), Krumij Roga (Infectious diseases), Asatmyaj roga (allergic disorders), the concept of Vyadhikshamatva (Immunity) is propagated by the Ayurvedic science. According to the concept of Ojas or Vyadhikshamatva or Bala (immunity), the body's resistance is of tremendous importance in the daily welfare of living beings not only for disease prevention but also

for rapid recovery after disease affliction. Ayurveda propounds that prevention is an equally important aspect of disease management as cure and thus, strengthening the immune system, is a natural way to help the body fight against the disease – causing pathogens. Acharyas promoted the use of Rasayanas (Rejuvenation) to enhance Ojas and Vyadhikshamatva (immunity). This article is an effort to present Ayurvedic concepts of Vyadhikshamatva.

INTRODUCTION

The healthy and joyful long life is the main priority of Ayurveda. Ayurveda explained the concepts related to health and disease in details, also the knowledge of etiology, symptomatology, therapeutics, numerous methods to sustain health status and causes behind falling sick. The main purpose and objectives of Ayurveda is the preservation of health in healthy individual and eradication of diseases which are curable.

The concept of Vyadhikshamatva (immunity) is of tremendous importance in the daily

wellness of human beings; for prevention and recovery from disease. When etiological factors come in contact with the body, they try to produce disease. At the same time, the body tries to resist the disease. This power of body, which prevents the development of disease or resists a developed disease, is called immunity. Vyadhikshamatva in Ayurveda is not merely immunity against a specific infectious agent or disease such as typhoid, measles or rubella for which modern medicine provides “immunizations”. Rather, Vyadhikshamatva implies a resistance against the loss of the integrity, proportion, and interrelationship amongst the individual’s doshas (bioenergies) and dhatus (tissues). Resistance to disease or immunity against disease is of two kinds i.e. the one which attenuates the manifested disease and other variety prevents the manifestation of disease.

Various factors which contribute towards vyadhikshamatva are normal doshas, equilibrium state of dhatus normal agni, patency of srotas etc. During certain conditions or due to certain factors even unwholesome (Ahitakara) dietary practices do not produce disease immediately. All unwholesome (Ahitakar) food articles are not equally harmful, all doshas are not equally powerful; all persons are not capable of resisting diseases. Vyadhikshamatva helps in to achieve the aim of Ayurveda i.e.

स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षणम् । आतुरस्य विकार प्रशमनम् च ।।

Ayurvedic literature from ancient texts to understand role of Vyadhikshamatva as per Ayurveda concept which may be helpful in this battle for survival of human beings.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The materials were collected from the classical Ayurvedic literatures, magazines and research journals.

3. Nirukti

It is made of two words i.e. vyadhi and kshamatva.

व्याधि — व्याध् तदने It means the condition which gives pida to adhistan or body.

क्षमत्व—क्षमुस् सहने It means Shakti or Samarthya.

4. Definition

Vyadhikshamatva denotes the resistance power of the body or defense of the body against first occurrence of any disease.

व्याधिक्षमत्वं व्याधिबलविरोधित्वं व्याध्युत्पाद प्रतिबन्धकत्वमिती यावत् ।

व्याधिक्षमत्वं – Capacity of the body to fight against the manifested disease (natural immunity)

व्याधिबलविरोधित्वं – Capacity of the body to not allow to produce disease.

4.1 Synonyms

Synonyms for Vyadhikshamatva which appears in Ayurvedic literatures

are:- Sleshma, Bala, Ojas.

4.2 Sleshma

The Kapha is one the Tridosha which retains the properties such as Snigdha, Sita, Guru, Manda, Slaksna, Mrtsna, Sthira. The normal phase of sleshma is called as Bala and Oja and abnormal phase is called as Mala and Papma.

4.3 Bala

Means Bala imparts firm integrity to the muscles, improve the voice and complexion, and helps the person to perform his natural functions.

Three types of bala (Vyadhikshamatva or immunity) are described.

- 1) Sahaja
- 2) Kalaja
- 3) Yuktikrita

4.4 Sahaja bala

सहजं वत् शरीर सत्त्वयो प्राकृतम् । (C.S 11/36)

The constitutional strength present since birth. It depends on the healthiness of Shukra (sperms) and artava (ovum). According to Ayurvedic concept of Genetics, if two parents “genetic makeup is healthy, then children are similar healthy, if parents are susceptible to certain disease, those diseases may be carried over into the next generation. This concept indicates congenital abnormalities which occur due to abnormal changes at genes or chromosomal levels.

4.5 Kalaja bala

आदावन्ते च दौर्बल्यविसर्गदानयोनृणाम् ।

मध्ये मध्यबलं त्वन्ते श्रेष्ठं अग्रे च निर्दिशेत् ।।(C.Su.6/8)

Temporal strength is the one which is based on division of seasons and age of the person. In Adana kala (Late winter, spring and summers) Bala of individual will be less and in Visarga Kala (Rainy seasons, autumn and winter), It will be more Bala will be Alpa (Minimum) in child and old age, Uttama (Maximum) in young age.

4.6 Yuktikrita bala

पुनस्तद्यदाहारचेष्ट योगजम् ।(C.Su.11/36)

Proper and suitable ahara (Nutritious diet), performing exercise (Chesta) with proper method & using different beneficial formulations; (eg :- Rasayana chikitsa)

4.7 Ojas

The essence of saptadhatu is called Oja and it is the seat for strength, hence called bala situated in the heart. It is viscous, unctuous, greasy, Somatmaka (preponderant in watery principal), clear (transparent) and slight reddish yellow in colour. Its loss (destruction, absence) may lead to death and its presence in the body (and life) sure to survive.

Classification of ojas

According to chakrapani ojas is of two types.

Para ojas

This is astabindu in quantity, if decreases then person will die.

Properties

Oja is white, slightly red and slightly yellow in colour, which resides in heart. Its destruction causes the death of a person.

Apara ojas

Apara Ojas is half Anjali in quantity, it is less important compared to Para Ojas.

Ojakshaya (Decrease or loss of ojas)

Ojas undergoes decrease by anger, hurry, worry, grief and exertion. With such decrease, the person becomes fretful, debilitated, worries much again, feels discomfort in the sense organ, develop bad complexion, bad mention and dryness of skin.

According to sushruta there are three stages of abnormality of ojasare

Ojovisravana

संधि विश्लेषो गात्राणां सदनं दोष च्यवन क्रिया सन्निरोधश्च विस्रंसे । (Su.Su.15/24)

Oja mixes with rasa dhatu in hridya and circulates through out the body via different srotas. When it oozes out from tiny dhatuvaha srotas, it doesn't reach to the certain parts of body and hence causes symptoms like

- Sandhi vislesha (Loss of firmness of joints)
- Gatra sada (Inertness of extremities)
- Dosha chyavan (Disturbance or displacement of doshas from their positions)
- Kriya sannirodha (Impairment of kayak vachik and mansik vyapaar)

Ojo vyapat

स्तब्ध गुरु गात्रता वात शोफो वर्ण भेदो ग्लानिस्तन्द्रा निद्रा च व्यपन्ने । (S.Su.15/24)

Vikrit oja produces following symptoms

- Stabhdha guru gastrata (Heaviness and stiffness of the body including extremities)
- Varnabheda (Impairment of normal skin complexion)
- Glani (Malaise)
- Tandra (Drowsiness)
- Nidra (Deep and excessive sleep)

Oja kshaya

मूर्च्छा मांस क्षयो मोह प्रलापो मरणमिति च क्षये । (Su.Su. 15/25)

This is the final vikriti of oja leading to depletion of Oja and Has following symptoms

Murcha (Loss of consciousness) Mamsa kshaya (Emaciation of muscle) Moha (Stupor)
Pralap (Delirium) Marana (Death)

Factors affecting vyadhikshamatva

There are around nine types of factors accountable for reducing the immunity. Ashtaninditya purush.

अतिदीर्घश्च अतिह्रस्वश्च अतिलोमश्च अलोम च, अतिकृष्णश्च अतिगौरवश्च, अतिस्थूलश्च , अतिकृशश्च ।

Following are the main factors affecting vyadhikshamatva as described by Acharya Charak:- Desha, Kala, Samyoga, Virya, Pramana, Oja, Bala, Jatakarma, Lehana karma, Suvarna karma, Dhoopana karma, Niyamita vyayama.

CONCLUSION

The concept of Vyadhikshamatva is very well documented in Ayurvedic literature. Different persons have different vyadhikshamatva which depends upon oja, bala, season, diet and regimen, anupana, rasa, jatakarma etc. One should wisely adopt these into his lifestyle so as to make his body and mind strong enough to deal with all the physical and mental stresses of modern era.

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