

**THE ROLE OF *KHAVAIGUNYA*, *DOSHA-DUSHYA*
SAMMURCHCHHANA, AND *SROTAS* IN DISEASE CAUSATION: AN
AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda explains disease causation as a complex interaction between internal and external factors. Among these, *Nidanas* (causative factors), *Doshas*, *Dushyas* and *Srotas* (body channels) play critical roles. The vitiation of *Doshas*, (intrication of vitiated *Dosha* and *Dushit Dushya*) when combined with structural or functional defects in *Srotas* (*Khavaigunya*), sets the stage for disease manifestation. The fourth stage of pathogenesis (*Shatkriyakala*)—*Sthanasamshraya*—is where *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana* (pathological interaction) occurs, marking the onset of disease. This article explores the interrelationships between *Nidana*, *Dosha*, *Dushya*, *Srotodushti*, *Khavaigunya*, and the four essential factors of disease manifestation, offering a comprehensive understanding of *Vyadhi Utpatti* (origin of disease) in *Ayurveda*.

KEYWORDS: *Khavaigunya*, *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyadhiutpatti*, *Nidana*, *Srotodushti*, *Shatkriyakala*.

INTRODUCTION

The *Ayurvedic* model of disease pathogenesis centres around the dynamic interaction of *Doshas* with *Dushyas* under the influence of *Nidanas*. However, mere exposure to causative

factors does not lead to disease unless a site of structural vulnerability—*Khavaigunya*—is present in the body.^[1] These sites of weakness in the *Srotas* act as fertile ground for *Dosha-Dushya* interaction. The detailed sequence of disease progression is explained in the framework of *Shatkriyakala*.^[2] particularly emphasizing the critical stage of *Sthanasamshraya* where actual localization and interaction of pathological factors take place.

Role of *Nidanas*, *Doshas*, and *Srotas* in Disease Causation

Improper food habits (*Ahara*) and lifestyle practices (*Vihara*) that exhibit similar properties to the *Doshas* and are antagonistic to the *Dhatus* act as key *Nidanas* in disease causation. These factors initiate vitiation (*Dushti*) of the *Doshas* and simultaneously render the *Dhatus* more vulnerable to their effects.

In the *Prasara Avastha* (stage of spread), the vitiated *Doshas* circulate through the body, producing two major pathological effects:

1. ***Dushti of Dushyas***: The aggravated *Doshas* interact with bodily tissues, disturbing their structure and function.
2. ***Khavaigunya in Srotas***: The *Doshas* simultaneously induce weakness or damage in the *Srotas*—the subtle channels that facilitate the movement of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas*.

Each *Dhatu* is linked with a specific *Srotas*. A particular *Nidana* may provoke a specific *Dosha*, which then interacts with and vitiates a particular *Dhatu*. The *Dhatu's Srotas*^[3] also undergo pathological changes, leading to structural compromise. This defect—termed *Khavaigunya*—becomes the potential site for future disease manifestation, especially during *Sthanasamshraya*.

Essential Factors for Disease Manifestation

According to Ayurvedic principles, four essential factors must be present for any disease to manifest:

1. ***Prakupit Dosha*** – Aggravated or vitiated *Dosha*
2. ***Dushit Dushya*** – Weakened or susceptible body tissue
3. ***Khavaigunya*** – Structural or functional defect in the *Srotas*
4. ***Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana*** – Specific pathological amalgamation of *Dosha* and *Dushya*

If any one of these four factors is absent, the disease process will not progress to manifestation. Among these, *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana* is the decisive step that determines whether the pathological potential becomes an actual clinical entity.

This *Sammurchchhana* occurs specifically at the site of *Khavaigunya*—a structurally or functionally compromised region within the *Srotas*. The site, the nature of the *Dosha*, the type of *Dushya*, and the involved *Nidana* all together create a disease-specific environment. When all four factors are simultaneously present, clinical symptoms begin to manifest.

Shatkriyakala: The Six-Stage Model of Pathogenesis

Ayurveda outlines six stages of disease development, collectively called *Shatkriyakala*^[4]:

1. ***Sanchaya*** (Accumulation): *Doshas* accumulate in their natural sites.
2. ***Prakopa*** (Aggravation): Accumulated *Doshas* become increasingly unstable.
3. ***Prasara*** (Spread): *Doshas* begin to circulate beyond their normal locations.
4. ***Sthanasamshraya*** (Localization): Vitiating *Doshas* localize at sites of *Khavaigunya* and interact with susceptible *Dushyas*.
5. ***Vyakta*** (Manifestation): Clinical symptoms appear as the disease takes a definitive form.
6. ***Bheda*** (Complication): The disease progresses into chronicity or complications arise.

The fourth stage—*Sthanasamshraya*—is pivotal, as it marks the beginning of *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana*.

Srotodushti and Khavaigunya

Khavaigunya refers to abnormalities in the *Srotas*. These defects may be:

- Due to past injury, chronic imbalance, or long-term exposure to *Nidanas*
- Structural (blockage, dilation) or functional (misdirection, excess flow)

Lakshana of Srotodushti include^[5]

1. ***Atipravritti*** – Hyperactivity or excessive flow
2. ***Sanga***^[6] – Obstruction or stagnation
3. ***Vimargagamana*** – Misguided flow
4. ***Siragranthi*** – Abnormal dilatation or knotting

***Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana*^[7]: The Fusion Point**

This pathological fusion takes place only when an aggravated *Dosha*, a susceptible *Dushya*, and a defective *Srotas* (*Khavaigunya*) coexist. The interaction is highly specific and results in:

- Initiation of *Purvarupa* (prodromal symptoms)
- Formation of early-stage pathology
- A defined disease identity in the *Vyakta* stage

Madhava Nidana defines *Purvarupa*^[8] as the subtle, premonitory symptoms that emerge before the disease fully manifests. Recognizing this stage is critical in preventing disease progression.

Disease Progression: From *Vyakta* to *Bheda*

- ***Vyakta Avastha***: The disease manifests fully with clear clinical signs and symptoms.
- ***Bheda Avastha***: The disease becomes chronic or leads to complications, often requiring complex intervention.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic pathogenesis is a multi-factorial process that emphasizes the importance of internal and external causative factors. Disease does not manifest arbitrarily but follows a systematic progression governed by four essential elements: vitiated *Dosha*, vulnerable *Dushya*, defective *Srotas* (*Khavaigunya*), and their specific interaction (*Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchhana*). The *Shatkriyakala* model enables early recognition and intervention, while understanding *Khavaigunya* and *Srotodushti* provides vital insight into disease localization and progression. This integrated view highlights the need for personalized prevention and treatment strategies rooted in the classical principles of *Ayurveda*.

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