

CONCEPT OF VYADHIKSHAMATVA (IMMUNITY) AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH BALA (VITAL STRENGTH)

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ABSTRACT

When a group of people exposed to a particular disease, the affect seen is categorized in four categories mild, moderate, severe and unaffected. The pathogenic factors require some essential favorable conditions to flourish and create the disease. Ayurveda finds *Bala* and *Vyadhi Kshamatava* as profound explanations for this phenomenon. These are also necessary for prevention and rapid recovery from illness. *Bala* is the cause for the good defense mechanism and to carry out all the physical and psychological actions. The depreciation of *Bala* is a constant sign observed in various degenerative diseases and recurrent infections. It can be increased by intake of wholesome food, immune modulator drugs like *Tinospora Cordifolia* Wild. (family- Menispermaceae) etc. A regular routine of seasonal and daily regimens along with mild physical work out. So, *Bala* and *Vyadhikshamatva* have cause and effect relationship.

KEYWORDS: *Bala*, Immunity, *Vvyadhikshamatva*.

INTRODUCTION

In our daily experiences with the continuously changing environment we came across many infecting agents. The external environment also checks the adaptive power of humans. *Kala* (time) causes the *caya* (deposition), variations. This adaptability of the body is termed as *Vyadhikshamat*. In terms of medical science it is called *Parakopa* (vitation) and *Prasamana* (normalization) of the *doshas* to affect the body and the *Parakopa* make one to suffer with the diseases. The nature has made the natural safety measures to claim superiority over such natural influences that hamper life. The nature had given us power to adapt and overcome the

immunity. It is the diversity of life that life exists in enormous forms starting from the smallest viruses and bacteria up to the largest one. All these creatures are the miracles of nature that somehow affect each other by causing them diseases and take their life too. The body with adequate *Vyadhikshamatva* is capable to overcome the effect of these pathogens to make oneself disease free or with the mild prevalence. The one who possess good *Vyadhikshmatva* has a good *Dehabala*. The good physical health means healthy body metabolism etc. Hence this review explores the relationship between *Vyadhikshmatva* and *Bala* and the factors that enhance both.

LITERARY REVIEW

The word *Vyadhikshamatva* is made of two words- „*Vyadhi + Kshamatva*“. *Vyadhi* is a condition which comes into existence as consequence of non-equilibrium of the *doshas* (physiological factors i.e *Vata*, *Pitta* & *Kapha*), *Dhatus* (tissues systems) and *Malas* (excretory products of body) which in their normal status maintains the physical and psychological health. The other word *kshamatva* is derived from *kshamus sahanē* meaning there by to be patient or composed to suppress anger, to keep quite or to resist. So, *vyadhikshamatwa* is that factor which limits the pathogenesis and opposes the strength of disease.

There are nine factors in an individual which promotes them towards the incapability to resist the disease manifestation.

- 1) *Ati- Sthoola* (Excessively obese persons)
- 2) *Ati-Krishha* (Excessively emaciated person)
- 3) *Anivista-Mamsa* (Individual having improper musculature)
- 4) *Anivista-Asthi* (persons having defective bone tissues)
- 5) *Anivista-Shonita* (persons with defective blood)
- 6) *Durbala* (Constantly weak person)
- 7) *Asatmya-Aaharopachit* (Those nourished with unwholesome food)
- 8) *Alpa-Aaharopachit* (Those taking diet in small quantity)
- 9) *Alpa-Sattva* (Individuals with feeble mind)

Along with this, there are some parameters which make the body resistant to the external environmental changes. Individuals whose bodies are neither too corpulent nor too emaciated, who possess healthy and good musculature, blood and bones are well nourished with whole some and sufficient food and who have strong *manas* are capable of resisting

diseases. Persons having proportionate musculature, compactness of the body and healthy sensory & motor organs are not overruled by the onslaught of diseases. They can withstand hunger, thirst and the heat of the sun, cold weather and physical exertion. They can also digest and assimilate food properly.

The factors which enhance the status of *vyadhikshamatva*. These are mentioned below-

- 1) Adequate *Ojas*
- 2) Adequate *Bala*
- 3) Follow of Seasonal Diet & regimen
- 4) Proper *Anupana* (post prandial drinks)
- 5) Consumption of six *Rasa* (type of foods)
- 6) *Jatakarma* (Birth ceremonial rituals)
- 7) Drugs (antioxidants)

When etiological factors come in contact with a person then they try to produce diseases. Some persons remain unaffected even after coming in contact with the relevant pathogenic factors while some others become victims of the disease. This capacity or power which makes the body capable to fight against the presentation of diseases in the body is said as *vyadhikshamatva*. The reasons for the same is given by *Charaka* that people have different ability to resist the disease causing factors. The reason is that when the resistance power of the body is sufficiently strong it destroys the causes. A conference titled “factors which provoke the diseases” the conclusion is that “*apathya aahara* (unhealthy food) is the cause for diseases and *pathya aahara* (healthy food) is cause for health”. Here, the significance of favourable and non-favourable diet in the development and production of a disease is proved.

It is also known that many people with right daily and seasonal habits also develop disease and some though indulging in improper habits hardly get any disease. Therefore a search for the answer to above conditions lead to some more factors involved in disease manifestation and the individual’s body provides a fertile bed for the disease causing agents. The disease not only depends upon the etiological factor but also depends on the resistance of the individual. So we can have a greater safety from the disease if we possess a good health (*Deha bala*).

The concept of *vyadhikshamatva* described in *charaka samhita* gives us a detail account of immunology and gives us newer thoughts to present day modern medical immunology.

Caraka quoted that all the individuals have different resistance for diseases. *Vyadhikshamatva* (the functional ability of immune system) varies from individual to individual in spite of their similar nutritional, environmental, physical and mental status. *Chakrapani* commented on the term *vyadhikshamatva* and gave two opinions:

- (I) *Vyadhi-balavirodhitvam*: It is the capacity to restrain or withstand the strength (severity) of the diseases i.e., strength to arrest the progress of disease.
- (II) *Vyadhi-utpadapratibandhakatva*: The resisting power of the body competent enough to arrest the occurrence and re-occurrence of the disease.

These both sub-types of *vyadhikshamatva* commutatively form the resistance which now a days called Immunity that is specific and non specific resistance.

DISCUSSION

Excessively obese or emaciated persons are very weak i.e. they are *durbala*. Similarly, the strength of the body depends largely upon the status of *dhatus* i.e. *mamsa dhatu*, *asthi dhatu* and *sonita*. Hence persons in whom these three *dhatus* have improper physiological functions are naturally very weak. *Caraka* has especially mentioned *mamsa*, *asthi* and *sonita* have direct relation with healthy immune response. This may be due to following reasons.

A. The healthy condition of these three *dhatus* will naturally maintained on equilibrium of three *doshas*, which is also required for resisting disease. This is because there is relation of interdependence (*ashraya-ashrayee-bhava*) between *rakta* and *pitta*, *mamsa* and *kapha* and *asthi* and *vata*.

B. The cells; WBC of blood (*rakta*) fight against infections and prevent the body from foreign pathogenic substance.

C. The red bone marrow in the *asthi* (bone) is responsible for manufacture of the red and white cells of the blood.

Persons involved with *alpa* (inadequate) and *ahita aahara* (unfavourable food) are very weak, as their *dhatus* (tissue system) are not properly nourished. Persons having feeble *sattva* (mind) are also weak because *sarirabala* (Physical strength) and *sattvabala* (Psychological strength) are interdependent so, the weak *manas* result in the weak *sarira* resulting poor immunity. Persons having good *bala* are found with good defense mechanism. It is the *bala* which makes the person capable for performing all the physical and psychological actions. The proper psychosomatic status of the body has adequate *agnibala* (digestive capacity),

dehabala (physical strength) which manifests itself as healthy immune system. Kala (time) also affects the immunity the *visarga kala* (southern solstice) increases the *bala* of the body results in healthy immunity Food taken in proper quality and quantity helps in bringing the strength, complexion, happiness and longevity. The habit of using all the six *rasa* everyday is ideal for maintenance of health. Intake of *madhura* (sweet) and *amla* (sour) *rasa* (taste) produces more strength in the body. To avoid the adverse affects of *dosha's caya, prakop* and *prasamana* one should have to follow the seasonal regimens by consumption of the *rasa* which are opposite to *kalakrat caya, prakop* of *doshas*.

Licking of *madhu* (honey), *ghrita* (fat) in unequal quantity with gold at the time of birth to neonates act as an external nutrition for them to activate their digestive system. Gold has a property to enhance the immune system.

Jatakarma Karnavedhana sanskara (ceremonial rituals of ear puncturing) is done at 6th or 7th month of age by puncturing the ear pinna for *raksha* (protection or resistance power) and *bhusan* (cosmetic value). Several drugs are claimed to enhance immunity i.e. before *gramya dharma* (couplation) *tail pradhana ahara* for female and *ghrita pradhana ahara* for male is prescribed. Specific drugs for pregnant women are described in different months of pregnancy for better fetal growth. According to the age group of children different *aahara kalpana* are prescribed for enhancing *bala* (strength) of children. *Rasayana* therapies which fortify *dhatu*s are described in all the texts for enhancing *bala* and prevent old age and disease. **VYADHIKSHAMATVA & BALA** *Bala* is a multidimensional functional identity of the body, which is the output of proper equilibrium state of *dosha, dhatu & mala* in the body. This comes in the form of *ojas* which is considered as the supreme essence of all the seven *rasadi dhatu*s. It is also stated as *sarvadhatusara*. The elementary constituents of our body i.e. *rasa, rakta, mamsa, meda, asthi, majja & sukra* contribute their extreme purest extract in the formation of *ojas*. In this manner *ojas* is formed in our body which is the purest factor of all the *dhatu*s.

The expression of this supreme essence in the body results in the good musculature, stable body, ability to perform activities, clarity of voice, good complexion, healthy *karmendriyas* (motor organs and nerves) & *gyanendriyas* (sensory organs and nerves) and healthy *vyadhikshamatva* (immunity power) of body. All these features are related to *bala*. Hence, it is to be said that *bala* is the *karya* (action) and *ojas* is the *karan* (cause) for *bala*.

Some factors shows the relationship of *Bala* with other bodily factors

RASA

RAKTA

MAMSA

MEDA

ASTHI

MAJJA

SUKRA (SUPREME EXTRACT)

OJAS (karan)

BALA

HEALTHY PHYSIQUE

HEALTHY IMMUNITY

HEALTHY MIND

Bala is visualized as an identity which is observed as the following:

1. Adaptability of the body to the climate with adequate quantity & quality of *rasadi dhatus*. Which are externally observed as well built body, stable musculature and to carry out physical activities in a normal way.
2. Psychological stability in life which is observed as the person endowed with memory & devotion, grateful, learned, pure, courageous, skill-full, resolute, fighting in battles with prowess, free from anxiety, intellectual engaged in virtuous acts.
3. Specific resistance in comparison to specific diseases which is otherwise called as *pratyaneek bala* or immunity.

CONCLUSION

A person with proper amount of *Bala* is also said to be complete with adequate amount of *Saptadhatu* (tissue system). This provides the capacity to resist the external disease causing agents. It is concluded that *Vyadhikshamatva* is the external and internal manifestation of *Bala* (vital strength). The *kapha Prakriti* body constitution, possess the best *Sahaja* (natural) *Bala* when compared to *pitta* and *vata* body constitution persons.

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