

A CONCEPTUAL VIEW ON THE ASSESSMENT OF *PRAKRUTI**

BY

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Abstract

Prakriti represents the balanced state of doshas It may vitiated throughout our life because of our physical characteristics, natural urges, likes and dislikes, and psychological predilections. Every person having their own personality. Not only each individual has different size and shape but its physiological and even psychological characters are different. Some like chilly, spicy food, others are sweet eaters. Some enjoy warm summer, some prefer winter. This shows each and every individual has its own specific, liking and disliking. These individualistic features are the manifestations of Prakriti¹.

Key words: Prakriti, Doshas, Swasthya, Sharira, Manas.

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Introduction:

Ayurveda is the ancient science, practiced since 1500BC which deals with the body, mind and spirit and emphasized for the preservation-promotion of health and prevention-cure of diseases. It provides measures for a disciplined, disease-free, long life. Ayurveda defines health as a state of physical, psychological, social and spiritual well being and is based on the theory of *Panchamahabhootas*(*Akash, Agni, Vayu, Jala & Pruthvi*) and *Tridoshas* (*Vata, Pitta and Kapha*) The equilibrium (Samyavastha) of *doshas* is called health and imbalance (*Vikriti*) is called disease(Vyadhi)^{2,4}. Together these three *doshas* determine the physiological balance and constitution of the individual which is called as *Prakriti* in Ayurveda. In each Purusha all the doshas are present but the predominance of doshas varies from person to person, along with the panchmahabhutas and Beeja (Shukra & Shonita). *Prakriti* is also described to be influenced by maternal factors including the intra-uterine environment, food and regimen adapted by the mother during pregnancy (*Matur Ahara Vihara*). This basic constitution which is fixed at the time of fertilization generally remains constant through out the life of that individual but the ahara and vihara affects the level of Doshas in the body. The knowledge of *prakriti* and the ability to subgroup individuals based on their predominant *prakriti*, in Ayurveda, which is one of its important and unique specialties and essential tools. This not only helps to understand the mental and physical nature of a person in health but also to know the susceptibility to diseases which assists in promotion of health, prevention and cure of diseases. It may also be mentioned that Ayurveda system primarily aims at treating the cause of the disease (and not just the symptoms) by identifying the imbalance of the *Tridoshas*.

Key distinguishing features for *prakriti* determination¹

VATA

1. Thin body frame, does not gain weight
2. Skin dry, rough, dark complexion, cracked
3. Hair dry and splitting
4. Quick performance of activities
5. Variable and/or poor appetite.
6. Physical working capacity less, resistance to disease usually poor
7. Prefers warm or hot food and climate.
8. Scanty perspiration, variable thirst
9. Tendency for constipation
10. Light sleep with many dreams
11. Prone to anxiety, worry and depression, unpredictable nature

PITTA

1. Medium body frame
2. Skin delicate, reddish complexion, warm to touch
3. Good/excessive appetite
4. Feels warm/hot sensation
5. Prefers cold food and climate, intolerance to hot food and climate
6. Tendency for loose motion
7. Excessive thirst and perspiration
8. Bright eyes, reddish sclera, yellow iris, sharp penetrating vision
9. Hair soft, premature graying, baldness
10. Intelligent, sharp memory, hot tempered, brave, jealous, aggressive, commanding nature

KAPHA

1. Large, board body frame, tendency to gain weight
2. Skin thick, soft, smooth, firm, glossy, fair complexion
3. Good stamina but slow in physical activities
4. Deep and pleasant voice
5. Moderate appetite
6. Moderate perspiration, low thirst
7. Deep and sound sleep
8. Large eyes, calm, stable with whitish sclera
9. Hair thick, oily, wavy dark coloured
10. Calm, cool, joyful, polite good nature

Conclusion:

For maintenance of health, every person should know his or her constitution. If the daily activities, diet, occupation and behaviour are not adjusted to balance this, then the constitutional humour will increase, thus giving rise to its characteristic diseases. If the constitution is known then herbs, diet and other regimens including Yogic posture can be advised correctly both for disease, treatment and to promote longevity.

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