

A Review of Panchamahabhuta Practiced

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Abstract - Ayurveda treatment principles are based on correcting the imbalances of Panchamahabhutas in the body. Thus it becomes very important for us to understand the concept of Panchamahabhuta, especially with an approach of treatment perspective. Since the human body and the nature are both created from the Panchamahabhutas, Ayurveda considers all substances found in the nature as medicine; provided that it is used for explicit indications and with suitable formulations. Therefore, it utilizes a wide range of materia medica mostly natural products viz. herbs, minerals, animal products and marine originates. They are used for indications in different conditions of health and disease. This reviewed study intends to demonstrate how Panchabhautika Chikitsa is conceptualized and practiced in various disorders.

Keywords: Panchamahabhuta, Ayurveda, Human Body, Five Elements

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary era is phase of knowledge and inventions where humans are in race of conceiving new concepts, but the good old theories of evolution of all substances still remain uncontested. The concept of Panchamahabhutas (five primordial elements) is intensely and scientifically articulated in Ayurveda classics and accredited that human body is Panchabhautika. Not only human body but all matters in this universe are composed of Panchamahabhuta. The food we consume is also composed of Panchamahabhutas and it undergoes digestion with the help of Jatharagni (digestive fire) thereafter it nourishes the Dhatus (tissues) alike to its properties. This concept in Ayurveda is known as Samanya vriddhi kaarnam i.e like increases like. e.g. Parthiva (Prithvi Dominant) properties of food will nourish the Parthiva component of the body.

The equilibrium of these five elements in the body symbolizes well being while their imbalance or disturbance represents disease. Panchabhautika Chikitsa is a branch of Ayurveda which analysis and treats based upon this principle. The word Panchabhautika Chikitsa covers an array of aspects regarding health, diet, exercise, occupation, surroundings, drugs, preparation of the medicines, diagnosis and treatment. The core idea involves analysis of the scientific facts and disease management approach on the background of Panchamahabhuta theory. In this study we will try to comprehend the theoretical as well as practical characteristic of Panchamahabhuta Siddhanta and establish this principle as the foundation of all other fundamentals viz Tridosha Siddhanta (theory of humors), Guna-Karma Vada (theory of property & action of matter), Garbhotpatti (fetal

development), Deha Sanghatana (body composition) etc. Evolution of Panchamahabhuta All the Karya Dravyas (perceivable matters) accessible in the world are Panchabhautika. Sushruta opines, Panchamahabhutas are capable of providing decisive explanation for the queries in the field of Ayurveda. In contemporary state of affairs each and every branch of science is busy in enunciating the basic opinion of existence which has lead to absolute anarchy in scientific fraternity. These limitations have fascinated them towards Indian philosophy. Ayurveda can satisfy them with a further fitting explanation on the basis of Panchamahabhuta Siddhanta. Evolution of Panchamahabhuta takes place in 3 levels

1. *First Level:* Evolution of Panchatanmatra (Subtle elements).
2. *Second Level:* Bhutantaranupravesha (Imitative pervasion).
3. *Third Level:* Panchikarana (Reciprocal pervasion).

II. APPLICATION OF PANCHAMAHABHUTA

A. Jwara (Fever)

Jwara is minor manifestation of Teja Mahabhuta. Increased Teja Mahabhuta does not produce fever every time. For that to happen the impairment/diminishing of Agni in Aamashya is essential and Ama is produced. That Sama Dosha pervades to Rasa Dhatu and displays the symptoms of fever. Unilateral increase in Teja Mahabhuta leads to Bhasmaka. In initial stages of fever fasting/ meager diet (langhana) is advised followed by Swedana. from the perspective of Panchamahabhutas the fever is the result of excessive Prithvi and Jala Mahabhuta. They pervade in each and every part of body thus reducing the space and movement of Vayu. In that case the first treatment principle is to create space for movement of Vayu and activation of Teja Mahabhuta which is achieved by Langhana. The period of Langhana depends upon the strength of patient and Dosha. In fever, digestion of Ama is the mainstay of treatment. All these drugs prove effective when used as infusion. All the ingredients are pungent, bitter, astringent and are opposite to the properties of Prithvi and Jala thus providing relief.

B. Atisaara (Diarrhoea)

Atisaara (Diarrhoea), Sangrahani (Sprue) and Arsha (Piles) are all interlinked with each other. The pathogenesis of Atisaara starts from Aamashaya. As it is the seat of Kapha Dosha, the properties of Jala and Prithvi Mahabhuta are

present in abundance. In Atisaara, the Drava (liquid) Guna of Jala Mahabhuta is increased. Due to specific etiology, there is abnormal increase in Jala Mahabhuta in Aamashaya, disturbing the equilibrium of Dosha. Also liquidity of Kapha Dosha increases excessively thus affecting Jatharagni (digestive fire). So the line of treatment should be reducing Jala Mahabhuta and increasing Teja Mahabhuta. In initial stages of Atisaara one should get rid of the accumulated abnormal Dosha by giving mild purgation. Thereafter to increase the Teja Mahabhuta there should be stimulation of Jatharagni by the drugs predominant in Agni and Vayu Mahabhuta. Increased Teja Mahabhuta counters the increased Jala Mahabhuta by drying it up by Soshana Karma.

C. Arsha (Piles)

Arsha is a disease caused by the vitiation of Apana Vayu in rectum. Here Ruksha (Dry) Guna of Vata is increased because of various Hetus (causative factors) cited in texts. Dry piles are associated with Vata and Kapha Dosha whereas in bleeding piles there is predominance of Pitta and Rakta (Blood). Treatment varies according to the condition; one where the patient has normal defecation and other when patient complains of constipation. In second case, the Ruksha Guna of Vayu is to be countered with Anulomana taila/ Snigdha Guna. One should consume Haritaki (Terminalia chebula) fried in Ghee (purified butter) mixed with jaggery and Pippali (Piper longum)/ Nisoth (Operculina turpethum). Both drugs are predominant in Teja Mahabhuta. By this anulomna there will be proper movement of Vayu, in turn stimulating Jatharagni.

D. Prameha

All the predisposing factors described by Ayurveda increase the properties of Kapha Dosha in primary stage; but till the time body continues to fight against it, the symptoms won't appear. As soon as it crosses threshold and diet has more of Kapha increasing components, Kapha Dosha Prakopa (accumulation beyond normal limits) occurs. Kapha Dosha is similar to Jala Mahabhuta thus Drava Guna of Kapha increases which is cardinal symptom of Prameha. Treatment includes the drugs which can absorb (Soshana) excess Drava Guna of Kapha.

E. Raktapitta (Haemorrhage)

This disorder should be treated with utmost care and without wasting any time as described by Charaka. Consumption of excess Pitta vitiating food is one of the major causative factors for Raktapitta. It is of two types: Urva Raktapitta and Adhoga Raktapitta. The treatment principle is very unique to this disease which is known as Pratimargam cha harnam i.e Urva Raktapitta should be treated with Dravyas having predominance of Prithvi and Jala Mahabhuta whereas Adhoga Raktapitta should be pacified by Dravyas which have principal Vayu and Akasa Mahabhutas.

III. DISCUSSION

Panchabhautika Chikitsa is a fundamental treatment which uproots the diseases from its base. The concept of Panchamahabhuta (five elements) is the base of Ayurveda to understand its physiology (normal functioning), pathology (disease formation) & pharmacokinetics (movement of drug within the body). Everything, including drugs, herbs and living beings are made of these indispensable elements. Every substance contains all of these five elements. Depending on the predominance of the content, the substance is classified as Parthiva, Aapya, Taijasa, Vayaviya and Akashiya (with predominance of earth, water, fire, air and space respectively). The permutation and combination of these elements and its quantity in a given matter determines its properties. Ayurveda understands body, mind and spirit likewise. It divides the constitution of people into three categories - Vata (ether/air), Pitta (fire) and Kapha (water/earth). These are three basic energies or life forces that are the biological derivatives of the five elements and they govern all the function and structure of the body or its existence as a whole. Since these are present in all matter they are used in Chikitsa also.

Chikitsa depends upon using Gunas opposite the qualities of causative factors. These Gunas are present in Panchamahabhutas, therefore judicious use of drugs on the basis of Panchamahabhuta can provide apt treatment. The concept of Panchamahabhuta principle is peculiarity of Ayurveda. Though, Ayurveda is having similar views with Darshana shastras like Vaisheshika, Sankhya etc. in many aspects, but the concept of Panchamahabhuta in Ayurveda is molded in such a way that, it becomes helpful in Nidana and Chikitsa, thereby fulfilling its aim of Dhatusamyam. Mahabhuta dominance of a Panchabhautika Dravya can be perceived by its karma (action in body), but it is not possible to recognize or forecast the arrangement of Mahabhutas, shapes and size of Mahabhuta molecules due to limitations of human senses and intelligence. So in this regards the present review article also opens a new research window in the field of Ayurvedic fundamental research on this Siddhanta.

IV. CONCLUSION

The fruitful conclusions, which have automatically emerged through the discussion of the conceptual review study, are being presented here. All the available Dravyas can be used as Aushada (medicine), but it requires proper logic and Yukti (planning). Also this is possible only after deep understanding of Panchamahabhutas as it forms the foundation base of all other Siddhantas (principles). This concept involves interpretation of scientific knowledge, and disease management approach on the background of Panchamahabhuta theory. While treating patients, Ayurveda does not emphasize on labeling diseases but gives due importance to Hetu (causative factors), Samprapti etc and analysis on the basis of different Siddhanta. This helps to

treat many complicated medical conditions which have no cure in contemporary medical science. Panmahabhautika Chikitsa Siddhanta is one of the imperative Siddhanta of Ayurveda which facilitates every Ayurveda practitioner to accept diagnostic and therapeutic challenges.

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