



Science

## AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF KOSHTHA AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN PANCHKARMA

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### Abstract

Ayurveda is the science of life. Panchakarma procedure comes under the shodhana chikitsa. Shodhana chikitsa is better than shamana chikitsa, because disease treated with shodhana therapy will never reoccur. Koshtha, Agni, bala are the assessment factor in Panchakarma. The term koshtha can be described in two ways. koshtha is nature of digestive tract or hollow parts of body which represents motility of the intestines and movement of food and fecal matter in the alimentary canal and elimination of stool. koshtha shodan is most important procedure in Panchakarma. Assessment of Koshtha is very important for Panchakarma therapy as Dosage of Shodhana drugs are dependent upon type of Koshtha. If Koshtha Assessment does not properly done then Samyak shodhan does not occur.

**Keywords:** Koshtha; Shodhana Chikitsa; Virechan Karma; Tridosha.

**Cite This Article:** Dr. Shriram Shivajirao Ragad, and Dr. Maya Vivek Gokhale. (2019). "AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF KOSHTHA AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN PANCHKARMA." *International Journal of Research - Granthaalayah*, 7(7), 416-421. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3370488>.

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### 1. Introduction

There are two types of treatment in *Ayurveda* called as *shodhana* and *shamana*.<sup>(1)</sup> *shodhana* is the method of eliminate the aggravated *doshas* from the body and purifying it, on other hand *shamana* it is to mitigate the aggravated *doshas* within the body itself. Assessment of *koshtha* play important role in *Panchakarma* procedure.

The term *koshtha* is explained in 2 senses in *Ayurveda*. Anatomically *koshtha* means the space or hollowness of the body for accommodation of organs including stomach, liver, spleen, pancreas intestine etc and pelvic cavity for accommodation of uterus, urinary bladder lower part of bowel etc called *koshtha*. Physiologically the *koshtha* is defined as bowel movement according to the basic constitutions of the person.<sup>(2)</sup>

## 2. Aim and Objective

- To Study the Importance of Koshtha in *Panchakarma*.
- To prove the importance of *koshtha* in Different Cases of *Virechan*.

### Types of Koshtha

There are three types of *koshtha* based on predominance of *doshas* such as :<sup>(3)</sup>.

Table 1: Showing Relation Between Koshtha- Dosh and Panchakarma Chikitsa.

	Types of koshtha	Dosha	Shodhanaa chikitsa
1	Krura (Hard)	Vata	Basti
2	Mrudu (Soft)	Pitta	Virechana
3	Madhya (Moderate)	Kapha	Vamana

#### **Krura Koshtha (Hard bowel):**

In *krura koshtha* *vata* is predominant *dosha*, increase of *vata* produces hard faeces with difficulty of elimination or even non-elimination. *koshtha* is dominated mainly by *ruksha* and *khara gunas* (qualities) of *vata dosha* over the *sar guna* of *pitta dosha*. Hence, *krura koshtha* will be poorly secretive and absorptive.

#### **Mrudu Koshtha (Soft bowel):**

In *mrudu koshtha* *pitta* is Predominant *Dosha*, increase of *pitta* causes watery or semi-solid faeces, moving out more than once or twice, in a day. *Mrudu koshtha* is characterized by *sara* (laxative), *drava* (fluid property), *snigdha* (unctuousness), and *laghu* (lightness) *guna* of *pitta dosha*. Hence the *koshtha* will be smooth, lubricated and slippery. Secretions will be more, but it will be poor in absorption.

#### **Madhyam Koshtha (Moderate bowel):**

In *madhyam koshtha*, *kapha* is Predominant *Dosha*. Increase of *kapha* causes soft, solid faeces moving out smoothly. In *madhyam koshtha*, there will be predominance of *snigdha*, *guru* (heaviness) and *sthira* (stable) *guna*. *Koshtha* will be secretive and will have more lubrication, but less slippery due to *guru* and *sthira guna* of *kapha*. *Madhya koshtha*, which is due to the *samavastha* of three *doshas*, there will be optimum secretion and absorption.

#### **Samakoshtha –**

*Ashtanga-hrudya* (Vagbhata) has mention four types of *koshtha*.<sup>(4)</sup> Along with previous 3 types of *Koshtha*. *Sama Koshtha* having dominance of *tridosha* having *Agni* is *Samagni* which is influenced by perfect balance of *tridosha* where person will having proper digestion will pass out normal stool

For the *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha doshas* of body *basti* (enema), *vireka* (purgation) and *vamana* (emesis) are the best therapies respectively, use of medicinal oil (both internally and externally is ideal for mitigating *vata*, ghee for mitigating *pitta* and honey for *kapha*.

### 3. *Koshtha* And *Virechana*

*Koshtha* is the expression of bowel habit, which depends on *Prakriti* (constitution). Generally, a subject with complaints of constipation is considered as *Krūra koshtha* produces dry and hard bowels Requires drastic purgatives of *snigdha*, *ushna* & *lavana* like *Shama*, *Kushta*, *Triphala*.<sup>(9)</sup> while in *mrudu koshtha* Minor laxatives easily induces diarrhea. *Kshir* (milk), *Aaragwadha*, *ekshu*, *takra*, *mastu*, *gudha*, *krushara*, *navamadya*, *ushnodak*, *draksha*<sup>(10)</sup> and in *madhyam koshtha* requires *kashaya* & *tikta* laxatives Requires medium purgatives of *katu* rasa and medium dose of Purgatives and laxatives. Doesn't purge by milk or minor laxatives. *koshtha* and *virechana dravya*.

Table 2: Showing Types of *Koshtha* & their *Virechana Dravyas*.

Sr. No.	<i>Koshtha</i>	<i>Virechana Dravyas</i>
1	<i>Krura Koshtha</i>	<i>Eranda Tail, Haritaki, Triphala.</i>
2	<i>Mrudu Koshtha</i>	<i>Kshir (Milk), Aaragwadha, Ekshu, Takra, Mastu, Gudha, Krushara, Navamadya, Ushnodak, Draksha</i>
3	<i>Madhyama Koshtha</i>	<i>Requires Kashaya &amp; Tikta Laxatives</i>

#### Importance of *Koshtha Pariksha* in *Shodhana Chikitsa*

- We understand the *prakruti* by *koshtha parikshana*, Example - *mrudu koshtha* person having *pitta prakruti*.
- To understand where the diseases is *koshtha gata* or *shakhagata* or *Madhyama*.
- Its help to decide *samprapti* of disease, either *doshas* going *koshtha* to *shakha* or vice versa.
- In *shamanaa* and *shodhana chikitsa* assessment of *koshthais* important to decide *Aushadhi dravyas* and *Aushadhi matra*. E.g. *Mrudu koshthapersons* require *soumya aushadhi* in minimum dose. *Krura Koshtharequire* *Teeksha aushadhi* in large dose. Same as *krur koshtha* required *tikshna dravya virechana*.
- Before *Shodhanaa Karma*, *Snehapana* is one of *Purvakarma*. *Sneha-dravya* and *snehamatra* (dose) can be decided by *Koshtha-Pariksha*. eg. Duration of *snehapan* in *mrudu koshtha* is 3 days.
- After *Panchakarma* observation of *doshas*, is *doshas* going *shakha* to *koshtha* or not.
- *koshtha pariksha* also helps To understand the *Ahar –vihar*

### 4. Discussion

*Koshtha* is most important concept which useful in different aspect of treatment part. Unfortunately, very few research occurs related to *koshtha* concept with Reference to *shodhan chikitsa*. Understand the relation of *prkruti-agni- koshtha* is important. *Pachakrma* is unique part of Ayurvedic treatment. In this *pachakrma* selection of drug as per patient is depend on *koshtha*.

#### *Koshtha* and *Agni*

*Ayurveda* give importance to concept called as *Agni*, which is also known as belly fire. This *Agni* is located in *Amashaya*, where partial digestion takes place in *pakwashaya* and *grahni* (small

intestine and duodenum). The *koshtha* or gut behavior also follows this *Agni*. Following table shows relationship between *Agni* and *koshtha* according to predominance of *doshas*.<sup>(6)(7)</sup>

Table 3: Showing Relationship Between Agni and Koshtha According to Predominance of Doshas

Sr.no.	Types of <i>koshtha</i>	<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Agni</i>
1	Krura (Hard)	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Visham</i>
2	Mrudu (Soft)	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Tikshna</i>
3	Madhya (Moderate)	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Manda</i>

#### Relationship between *Krur koshtha* -Agni with *Doshas*:

The *krur koshtha* Predominant *dosha* is *vata*. In *Vata Prakruti Agni* is *vishama* means it is uneven in the function of digestion

#### Relationship between *Mrudu koshtha* -Agni with *Doshas*:

The *mrudu koshtha* Predominant *dosha* is *pitta*. *Pitta* and *Agni* are the same in properties so the food digest quickly. There is frequency for bowel is clear formation of soft stool.

#### Relationship between *Madyam koshtha* -Agni with *Doshas*:

The *madyam koshtha* predominant *dosha* is *kapha* the digestion of in this type of *Agni* will be mild to moderate so the formation of stool is neither to hard nor to soft it is normal. this type of *koshtha* found in healthy people

### 5. Analysis of Koshtha

This finding may be misleading as this may be an acquired condition and so it is important to distinguish between what is constitutional and what is acquired. Constitutional means the nature of bowel habit since from birth.

The bowel habits were examined in following way-

- Frequency
- Consistency, straining or efforts
- Time taken for proper defecation
- Satisfaction
- Previous encounters of diarrhea and constipation
- Previous experiences of purgatives and laxatives.
- The above points regarding the *Malapravritti* were considered for the assessment of *Koshtha*.

Table 4: Showing Analysis of Koshtha with Different Point

<i>Koshtha</i>	Duration of <i>Snehapana</i>	<i>Malapravritti</i>	<i>Aaharshakti</i> & <i>jaranshakti</i>	Duration
<i>Krura Koshtha</i>	7 days	Hard and dry stools	<i>vishama</i> (irregular frequency and quantity)	Doesn't pass stool regularly

<b><i>Mrudu koshtha</i></b>	3days	Semi formed or formed stool	<i>Tikshna</i> (more frequency and quantity)	Passes Stools daily once or twice regularly,
<b><i>Madhyama koshtha</i></b>	5 days	normal stools	<i>Manda</i> (less)	Passes stools daily once,

### Analysis of Dose of Virechan Drug & Veg of different Patient

Table 5: Showing Analysis of Dose of Virechana Drug & Veg in Different Patient

<b><i>DOSE</i></b>	<b><i>Patient -Antiki pariksha</i></b>	
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.2</i></b>	13	<i>Kaphanta</i>
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.2</i></b>	33	<i>Kaphanta</i>
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.3</i></b>	16	<i>Kahpanta</i>
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.3</i></b>	35	<i>Kaphanta</i>
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.4</i></b>	22	<i>Kaphanta</i>
<b><i>Abhayadi modak Tab.4</i></b>	35	<i>Kaphanta</i>

The above table shows that same dose of *virechan* drug was given to patient but the number of *vega* in those patients were different because *Vega* depends upon *koshtha* of Patients. Here is the Analysis of 6 patients who had been given *virechan* treatment. *Abhayadi modak* was *virechak dravya* given to all these 6 patients. From that study it was observed that-with intake of 2 tablets of *abhayadi modak*, one patient got 13 *virechana vega*; while other patient got 35 *virechan vega*. To another patients with intake of 3 tablets of *abhayadi modak* one patient got 22 *virechan vega* while other patient got 35 *virechan vega*. To another patients with intake of 4 tablets of *abhayadi modak*, one patient got 16 *virechan vega* while other patient got 35 *virechana vega*.

From above table it can be concluded that though the same dose of *virechan dravya* was administered in different patients resulted in different number of *vega*. The factor which was different in patients was *koshtha* due to which different *vega* occurred. This show that study of *koshtha* is important. Before selection of dose of drug for *virechan* or any panchakarma. *Assesment of koshtha is important otherwise the vyapad like Ayog or Atiyog will be seen in patient.*

*So, in above table the patients who had been given 2 tablets where of mrudu koshtha still the symptom of kaphanta which is of samyak shodhan was observed. The patient who showed 13 vega of madhyam koshtha & 33 vega of mrudu koshtha. in the same way where 4 tablets were administered patient showed 35 vega. As the patient was krura koshtha after 4 tablets the vega were 35 kaphant symptom occurred. While as previous patient showed 33 number of vega by 2 tablets. This proves the important of koshtha after assessment of patient koshtha the mrudu koshtha patient given 2 tablet while krur koshtha patient given 4 tablet both showed symptom of samyak virechan, So assessment of koshtha is very important not only in virechan but also in Vaman & Basti. For Basti also mrudu koshti patient given less amount of basti dravya the amount of Sneha & madhu is adjusted accordingly in vaman also for mrudu koshthi patient the madan phal matra is adjusted accordingly too avoid atiyog this is the importance of koshtha in panchakarma.*

## 6. Conclusions

*koshtha* is the basic and important concept in Ayurveda. *Koshtha* plays an important role in selection the line of treatment of disease. *koshtha parikshan* is required before *shodhana* treatment. For selection of drug *matra anupan*, *snehapan koshtha* assessment is necessary. In short, this review paper highlights the concept of *koshtha* and its importance in *panchkarma*.

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