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. Shodhanaa chikitsa is better than shamanaa 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.


1. Introduction

There are two types of treatment in Ayurveda called as shodhana and shamana.(1) 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.(2)
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 :(3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of koshtha</th>
<th>Dosha</th>
<th>Shodhana chikitsa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Krura (Hard)</td>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Basti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Mrudu (Soft)</td>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Virechana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Madhya (Moderate)</td>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>Vamana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.(4) 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 koshta* produces dry and hard bowels Requires drastic purgatives of snigdha, ushna & lavana like Shama, Kushta, Triphala. *(9)* while in *mrudu koshta* Minor laxatives easily induces diarrhea. *Kshir* (milk), Aaragwadha, ekshu, takra, mastu, gudha, krushara, navamadya, ushnodak, draksha *(10)* and in *madhyam koshta* 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.

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

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 *koshtha*‘s important to decide *Aushadhi dravyas* and *Aushadhi matra*. E.g. *Mrudu koshtha*persons require *soumya aushadhi* in minimum dose. *Krura Koshtha*require *Teeksha aushadhi* in large dose. Same as *krur koshtha* required *tikshna dravya virechana*.
- Before *Shodhanaa Karma*, *Snehapana* is one of *Purvakarma*. *Sneha-dravya* and *sneha-matra* (dose) can be decided by *Koshta-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 Referenc 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 *koshta* or gut behavior also follows this *Agni*. Following table shows relationship between *Agni* and *koshta* according to predominance of *doshas*.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.no.</th>
<th>Types of <em>koshtha</em></th>
<th><em>Dosha</em></th>
<th><em>Agni</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Krura (Hard)</td>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Visham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mrudu (Soft)</td>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Tikshna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Madhya (Moderate)</td>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>Manda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relationship between *Krura 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 *koshta* 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 *Malapraavritti* were considered for the assessment of *Koshta*.

Table 4: Showing Analysis of *Koshta* with Different Point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Koshta</em></th>
<th>Duration of <em>Snehapana</em></th>
<th><em>Malapraavritti</em></th>
<th><em>Aaharshakti &amp; jaranshakti</em></th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Krura Koshta</em></td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>Hard and dry stools</td>
<td><em>vishama</em> (irregular frequency and quantity)</td>
<td>Doesn't pass stool regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrudu koshtha</td>
<td>3days</td>
<td>Semi formed or formed stool</td>
<td>Tikshna (more frequency and quantity)</td>
<td>Passes Stools daily once or twice regularly,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhyama koshtha</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>normal stools</td>
<td>Manda (less)</td>
<td>Passes stools daily once,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Dose of Virechan Drug & Veg of different Patient

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOSE</th>
<th>Patient -Antiki pariksha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhayadi modak Tab.4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 koshta 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 virechana vega. To another patients with intake of 3 tablets of abhayadi modak one patient got 22 virechan vega while other patient got 35 virechana vega. To another patients with intake of 4 tablets of abhayadi modak, one patient got 35 virechana vega while other patient got 35 virechana vega.

From above table it can be concluded that though the same dose of virechana drug was administered in different patients resulted in different number of vega. The factor which was different in patients was koshta due to which different vega occurred. This show that study of koshta is important. Before selection of dose of drug for virechan or any panchakarma. Assessment of koshta 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 koshta 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 koshta after assessment of patient koshta the mrudu koshtha patient given 2 tablet while krur koshtha patient given 4 tablet both showed symptom of samyak virechan, So assessment of koshta is very important not only in virechan but also in Vaman & Basti. For Basti also mrudu koshthi 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 koshta 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*.

References


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