

Prakriti - important tool for health and disease

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Abstract

Prakriti is the profile or unique psychosomatic temperament of an individual, encompassing his or her physical, functional and behavioral characteristics. In Indian system of healthcare, three *Doshas*, namely, *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*, are the basic mutually reciprocal mechanisms that are responsible for the maintenance of homeostasis in human beings. First of all the mostly accepted theory of *prakriti* is based on tridosha. Ayurveda classifies entire human population into seven constitutional types (*Prakriti*), based on the dominance of any single or a combination of two or three *Doshas*. *Purusha* or the body is considered to be a combination of various components like *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Indriya*, *Manas*, *Buddhi* and *Atma*. Like genetic coding, every individual has a different combination and is therefore a distinct entity. Dietary preferences, behavioral patterns, job options, performance abilities are all strikingly different between any two individuals. Knowing one's *Prakriti* holds the key to health, liberation, and ultimately, self-realization.

Key words: *Prakriti*, *Tridosha*, Health, Disease

Introduction

The word '*Prakriti*' means 'nature' and this reflects the natural state of human beings an anatomical, physiological, and psychological level [1]. In Ayurveda, no two people are alike, or we can say that every person is born with a definite genetic constitution. The *Prakriti* is vital in determining our body type, behavior patterns, needs, and our predispositions. The *Doshas* are three forms of energy that work as a team in the body, like executives of an organization.

There is certain relation between parents and inborn child in blood grouping. The hereditary gene is directly concerned with the inborn child's metabolic pattern too. The inborn metabolic pattern of an individual is the continuation of metabolic pattern of the parents. So this relation according to modern discovery is due to gene [4]. But around thousands of years ago no word called "gene was

used. In fact the *pitri bhav* (Father's character) and *matri bhav* (*Matrij* character) refer to gene xx and xy, it is not so direct but pointing towards these genes. Still re discovery of *Prakriti* is not there in modern techniques. Some questions are still unanswered, why someone is successful, rich, poor and variation in their life? Is this also inborn character that one get success every time? No answer but Philosophy in Ayurveda is trying to show path for the answers.

According to Ayurveda, the native Indian system of medicine, the entire human population can be divided into seven constitutional types (*Prakriti*). Among all *Prakriti* vata are lean and thin. Pitta is intelligent and kapha are remarkably less intelligent with large size body. Usually body is not only one type, so Vata-Pitta body has the pure circulation and has mixed characteristics. Whereas, many people who achieve all round success in life are pitta-kapha *Prakriti* people. *Vata-kapha* is usually jealous. Sama *Prakriti* (*vata pitta kapha* all balanced) people are

best of all [2]. As per this system, three mutually reciprocal mechanisms known as *Doshas*, namely, *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* are responsible for the maintenance of homeostasis, and thus, the health [3].

For the individual, basic knowledge of the *Prakriti* is a vital tool in helping one determines the most auspicious lifestyle factors that will ensure wellness and longevity — appropriate foods, herbs, exercise regimes, medicines, therapies, and even suitable professions. Knowing one's *Prakriti* holds the key to health, liberation, and ultimately, self-realization.

It is very important and useful for us. Just take a look at some of the basis, which helps us to understand the importance of *Prakriti* in an individual: The characteristics of doshas tell about the nature of the person-

1. Understanding of human life with the help of *Prakriti*

The following factors of a human life can be applied to understand the variations in different persons by the help of *Prakriti*, and on the basis of this, an individual is able to understand him/herself better and able to live according to his/her 'nature, thus carving out a more appropriate life for him/herself.

- Life span of an individual
- *Sadavritta* (Social life)
- Measuring of an individual
- To choose the perfect partner in marital affairs
- To choose an appropriate profession/occupation

2. Observation of Health status according *Prakriti*

Prakriti reveals everything about a particular individual. We can therefore assess his/her status of health, such as strength (physical and mental), appetite, adaptability, compactness of his body, and on the basis of these findings we can form some conclusions about his health status.

3. Disease susceptibility and *Prakriti*

Each person in the universe has a unique combination of *Doshas* in their body, known as

Prakriti. Due to faulty dietary habits or lifestyles or by not following a regimen according to his/her *Prakriti*, a person can be more prone to diseases that are caused by the very same *Dosha* of his *Prakriti*. It is also described in Ayurveda that *Vata Prakriti* persons are more prone to diseases, so such a person should adhere to the suggestions and rulings regarding food and lifestyle according to his/her *Prakriti*.

4. Preventive and promotive health care according *Prakriti*

A person is able to prevent various disorders from developing and is also able to promote his health by knowledge of his/her *Prakriti*. It helps in analyzing and observing dietary habits, lifestyles, daily and seasonal regimens etc. Ayurveda also prescribes various foods and lifestyles according to one's *Prakriti* and suggests that one should follow these guidelines to prevent various disorders and to promote health [1]. To adopt healthy dietary habits & healthy lifestyle in the reference of *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya*.

5. Diagnosis of the diseases according *Prakriti*

The analysis of *Prakriti* is very important to diagnose the underlying disorders and to treat that patient. By observing the *Prakriti*, diagnosis of a particular disease becomes more simple, as it not only provides an idea about the vitiated *Dosha* but also provides the treatment principles for that person.

6. Role of *Prakriti* in the management of disease

Treatment is dependant on the acceptability of body to medications. *Prakriti* shows us which types of herbs, diets, and lifestyles will help in the treatment of that person. With the help of *Prakriti* we can assess the patient very well for his physical and mental strength, appetite, likes and dislikes and his adaptability to food and medicines

Conclusion

The concept of *Prakriti* in Ayurveda holds good factor that it takes the individual's constitution, susceptibility to diseases, mental makeup, lifestyle and diet factors into consideration for treatment.

Thus in this method of treatment they consider the individual as a whole rather than just focusing on the diseases. Once the patient's constitution is known the treatment in Ayurveda is carried out in such a way which helps in leading a balanced optimal health in all fields

One's *Prakriti* holds the key to health, liberation, and ultimately self-realization.

Thus, analysis or knowledge of *Prakriti* is essential for all to remain healthy and to achieve the goals of a human life.

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