

Concept of Shatkriyakala as mentioned in Sushruta Samhita

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Abstract

Ayurveda, our cultural heritage, is the ancient system of medicine, serving living beings since time immemorial. It is a unique system, in the sense of its fundamental doctrines and concepts. *Kriyakala* is one of the various important concepts described in *Ayurveda* treatises. *Kriyakala* means opportunity or time to administer treatment. These are six in number and are hence known as *Shatkriyakala* viz. *sanchaya*, *prakopa*, *prasara*, *sthansamshraya*, *vyakti* and *bheda*. It is a concept which describes different phases of a disease in its own unique way. It shows the step wise progress of *dosha* and disease. *Kriyakala* is helpful in the diagnosis, prognosis and the treatment of a disease. This very concept is useful even in prevention of diseases.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, *Kriyakala*, *dosha*, disease.

Introduction

Kriyakala means the time or opportunity of treatment in the process of disease manifestation. These six stages are mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* and give an idea regarding the state of the disease in the body. In the process of disease manifestation, the movement of morbid *dosha* into the next stage depends upon the virility of *nidana*. The causation of disease is attributed to *dosha* hence it is essential to know the status of *dosha* in the form of *sanchaya* (accumulation) or *prakopa* (aggravation) as well as stage of progression at a given point. From the stage of *sanchaya* to *prasara*, the different stages of the vitiation of *doshas* is discussed and from *sthana- samshraya* to *bheda* stage, different stages of disease progression are described by which the physician can know the step wise development of morbidity. This concept is very useful in clinical practices which gives the clear guideline that if *doshas* are alleviated in the early stage i.e. *Sanchaya-avastha*, they do not progress further and disease progress is checked.

Shatkriyakala

The *Kriyakalas* are six in number viz. *Sanchaya* (stage of accumulation), *Prakopa* (stage of

inclination or aggravation), *Prasara* (stage of migration or spreading), *Sthana- samshraya* (stage of localisation), *Vyakti* (stage of manifestation) and *Bheda* (stage of complications). Brief review of the same is as follows-

1. Sanchaya

First stage of *Kriyakala* is known as *Sanchaya* meaning collection, putting together i.e. the accumulation of *dosha* due to various *nidana* factors. In this stage, *doshas* get accumulated but they do not leave their own place and this state of *dosha* is known as *sanchaya*. In *Vata sanchaya- Stabdhapurnakoshthata*, in *Pitta sanchaya- Mandoshmata*, *Pita-avabhasata* and in *Kapha sanchaya— Gaurava*, *Alasya* are observed. *Samhati- rupa vridhhi* (gradual accumulation) of *dosha* in respective places is seen in the first stage of *sanchaya*.

2. Prakopa

When the *doshas* are in *sanchaya* condition, if *nidana* intake persists, *dosha prakopa* stage follows. *Prakopa* stage is limited to the state of readiness of *dosha* to move from its own place. This means that *dosha* increases in quantity and is

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ready to move. Specific symptoms and signs are seen in this stage such as *Koshtha- toda*, *Sancharana* of *vayu* in *koshtha* in *Vata prakopa*, *Amlika*, *Pipasa*, *Paridah* in *Pitta prakopa* and *Annadvasha*, *Hridayotklesh* in *Kapha prakopa*. *Vilayan- rupa vriddhi* of *doshas* is observed in *prakopa* stage as per *Acharya Dalhana*.

3. Prasara

It is the third stage of *kriyakala*. If *nidana- sevan* (indulgence in causes of disease) is continued and *prakopavastha* is not encountered, the *dosha* will move to the stage of *prasara*. In *prakopa* state, *doshas* get excited and are ready to move, whereas in *prasara* they overflow or spread or will move to other organs. *Prasara* of *doshas* is of fifteen types including *prasara* of *Rakta*. Here it is important to note that *Acharya Sushruta* has given weight age to *Rakta*, equivalent to *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. It may be because of his association with school of surgery. But, he has discussed the symptoms of *prasara- avastha*, according to *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha dosha* only. In the *Vata prasaravastha-Vimargagamana*, *Atopa*, in *Pitta prasaravastha-Osha*, *Chosha*, *Paridah*, *Dhumayan* and in *Kapha prasaravastha- Arochaka*, *Avipaka*, *Angasada*, *Chardi* are observed. *Hetu, linga chikitsa* of *dosha* is advised up to *prasara -avastha*, after which *vyadhichikitsa* is followed.

4. Sthana- Samshraya

If continuation of etiological factor persists in *prasara- avastha*, *dosha* or *doshas* move further, into the stage of *sthana- samshraya*. Vitiating *doshas* in circulation settle wherever *srotavaigunya* is present. This settlement of *dosha* at a place is called *sthana- samshraya*. As per the opinion of *Dalhana*, agitated *dosha* spreading to different places get stuck at obstructions owing to abnormality in *srotas*, this phenomenon is called *sthana- samshraya*. When the *doshas* are localized in abdomen they produce *gulma*, *Udara- roga*, *Agnisada*, *Anaha*, *Visuchika*, *Atisara* etc.; in urinary bladder they produce *Prameha*, suppression of urine and other urinary problems; when situated in skin, muscle, and blood they produce minor skin diseases, leprosy, erysipelas; when situated in medas they cause cysts, scrofula, tumour, goitre, *Alaji* etc. It means that diseases are produced according to *adhishthan* (site) of *dosha* in the body. When *doshas* are established in this way, there is appearance of premonitory signs and symptoms as per the view of *Acharya Sushruta*.

5. Vyakti

It is the fifth stage of *kriyakala*. If *nidana* is continuously present in the stage of *sthana- samshraya*, *dosha* enters *Vyaktibhava* stage. *Vyadhi darshana*, meaning appearance of all signs and symptoms of the disease, is a result of this stage. In this stage the disease is well manifested in the form of fever, inflammation, tumour, cyst, abscess, erysipelas, diarrhea etc. As per *Dalhana*, appearance of clear cut symptoms of a disease is known as *vyakti*.

6. Bheda

It is the sixth stage of *kriyakala* wherein they burst and become ulcers and in case of fever, diarrhoea etc. attain chronicity. If the disease is untreated or improperly treated in *Vyakti- avastha*, then it lands in this succeeding stage of *Bhedavastha* wherein it gives birth to another disease or diseases which are called *Upadrava* (complications). If not treated properly, it becomes incurable.

Importance of Kriyakala

Doshas, if eliminated in the stage of accumulation do not attain successive stages. They become stronger as they proceed further. Treatment in earlier stages is easier than in later stages. *Kriyakalas* are useful to know the prognosis of the disease and in the decision of treatment strategy. If *doshas* are treatable then their elimination is prescribed in three ways according to the condition of the *doshas*- if there is abundance of *dosha*, evacuation is recommended, in case of moderate presence, lightening and digestion, while in limited *dosha*, pacification is useful. While stating the significance of *Shatkriyakala*, *Acharya Sushruta* has stated, that one who knows the accumulation, aggravation, spread, localization, manifestation and specification of *doshas* and their complications is the real physician.

Conclusion

Acharya Sushrut has discussed about *shatkriyakala* in his treatise in the chapter entitled '*Vran-prashna Adhyay*'. It is a phenomenon observed in almost all the disorders. The concept of *shatkriyakalas* is applicable in *nidana* aspect for proper diagnosis and gives an idea to plan the line of treatment of that disease. The duration of a particular stage depends upon the virility of *nidana* and swiftness of *dosha* which in turn depends upon the triggering factors and nature of the disorder. Early diagnosis of a disease helps to cure the disease without much discomfort .If a

physician is able to detect the changes in early stages like *sanchaya*, *prakopa* etc. based on the manifestations of *dosha* and advise the correct treatment at that stage, disease progress can be checked and homeostasis can be restored.

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