SHUKRA; THE ESSENCE OF ALL OTHER DHATU: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Human body is made up of seven Dhatus (seven categories of tissues). Shukradhatu is located in entire body. Shukra is white, pure, excellent Dhatu, which is considered as best among all seven Dhatus. ‘Shukra’ is word originated from ‘Shucha’ Dhatu which means pure or excellent. Teja, Reta, Bijam, Virayam, Indriyam are some of the synonyms of Shukradhatu. Shukra means bright, pure and radiant. Shukra is the seventh and final Dhatu in the Dhatus formation cycle. In metabolism of Shukradhatu nutrients essential for Shukradhatu are digested by Shukuradhatwagni and forms Shukradhatu. For the formation of Shukradhatu one month period is essential. Individuals having the excellence of Shukradhatu are shown physical & psychological characteristics. According to texts of Ayurveda, Shukradhatu is pervading all over the body. It gives courage to a person. It creates softness in the mind. It is responsible for strength of individuals. Vitiation of Shukradhatu shows Shukradhatu dusti (pathology) in the form of Vridhhi (hyper state) or Kshaya (waning). This vitiation may leads to mainly infertility and many other physical as well as psychological disorders. Therefore, it has a vital role in context to reproduction as well as to maintain physical and mental health. It is present in our body in invisible form like Ghee in the milk. It is the end product of Dhatu parinaama or formation of Dhatu. So it is considered as an essence of all Dhatu. As it is essence of all other Dhatus, Charak samhita and Sushrut samhita has not described its Mala (waste).

KEYWORDS: Reproduction, Shukradhatu, Shukravaha Srotas, Stree, Shonita, Artava.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has described three basic physiological constituents of human body, viz., Dosha, Dhatu and Mala. They are compared with roots of trees, as tree roots are important for its health; same like that these three constituents are necessary for human’s health. Human body is composed of Dhatus, i.e. basic forms of body tissues. Dhatus are seven in number, hence called as ‘Saptadhatu’. They are rasa (plasma), Rakta (formed blood cells), Mamsa (muscle tissues), Meda (fatty tissues), Asthi (bone tissue), Majja (bone marrow and nervous tissues) and (reproductive tissues). Shukra is the Dhatu which is highly responsible for the reproductive elements of the body. It is the most refined product or essence of all the seven Dhatus. It is referred by two different names wherein in male it is known as Shukra and includes the sperm and in female, it is known as Shonita and is responsible for ovum. Shukra dhatu (reproductive tissues) is present in whole body but its location is described around bladder opening according to Sushruta. Various scholars have quoted Vrishana (testis), Shepha (penis), Stana (breast) and Majja (bone marrow) as Moola-sthana (origin) of Shukravaha srotasas (system related with reproductive tissue). These all references as cited above, reveal that Shukra dhatu is present in every cell of body, but it is present predominantly in reproductive organs.

Shukradhara kala is important structure, which occupies in whole body. In metabolism of Shukradhatu nutrients essential for Shukradhatu are digested by Shukuradhatwagni and forms Shukradhatu. For the formation of Shukradhatu one month period is essential. Individuals having the excellence of Shukradhatu are shown physical & psychological characteristics. According to texts of Ayurveda, Shukradhatu is pervading all over the body. It gives courage to a person. It creates softness in the mind. It is responsible for strength of individuals. Vitiation of Shukradhatu shows Shukradhatu dusti (pathology) in the form of Vridhhi (hyper state) or Kshaya (waning). This vitiation may leads to mainly infertility and many
other physical as well as psychological disorders. Therefore, it has a vital role in context to the sustenance, nourishment & reproduction as well as in maintaining physical and mental health. It is present in our body in invisible form like ghee in the milk. It is the end product of Dhatu parinama or formation of Dhatu. So it is considered as an Essence of all Dhatu.

Utpatti of Shukra Dhatu

Shukradhatu is last Dhatu. It gets generated in intra uterine life. Growth and nourishment is by food just like any other Dhatu. Food, after ingestion, is transformed into Rasa dhatu, which nourishes Rakta, & ultimately leads to Shukradhatu [1] This process takes around one month to complete. These two references show us the importance of food for formation of potent Shukradhatu.

When Majjadhatu takes its origin in Majjavahastrotas, Majjadhatwagni acts on its nutriments coming from Ahararasa and from Asthivahastrotas. Majjadhatu is produced in Majjavahastrotas; it takes part in production of Shukradhatu. Nutrients coming from Ahararasa and from Majjavahastrotas are metabolized by Shukradhatwagni and convert it into Shukradhatu. Shukradhatu is produced from excel part of Aahararasa. After the digestion of ingested food, it converted into two parts. One is essence part while another is excreted part. Essence part gives rise to all types of Dhatu in their own Strotas (channels). With the help of Vyanyayu this excel part is circulated all over the body. When the nutrients which are essential for the production of Shukradhatu, which is formed during the metabolism of Majjadhatu comes in contact with Shukradhatwagni in Shukravaha Srotas, and Shukradhatu is produced. Charak samhita had a very different view regarding in the nourishment of Shukradhatu. The unctuous substance (essence) to that Majja (bone marrow) thereafter gives rise to Shukradhatu. Porosity of bone is caused by Vayu, Akash etc., and through these porous holes, exudation of Shukra takes place. This happens on the analogue of the exudation of water through the porous walls of new earthen pot. [2]

Shukra Abhivyakti

Human body is made up of seven Dhatus (seven categories of tissues). Shukra is seventh Dhatu. It is present in whole body. It becomes active after the age of sixteen years, even though it is present since birth. [3,4]

Shukradhatu in Male and Female

The Shukra in women is secreted during sexual activity. However, it is not useful in Garbhopatiti. [5] (Fertilization) Shukra (vaginal secretions) expressed during sexual activity is not capable of participating conjugation of sex gametes. Artava (ovum) functions for fertilization, not the secretion of female Shukra.

Charak commentator Gangadhar has explained that, even females have seven Dhatus as in males. Rasa produced from Ahara serially goes through Dhatuparinaman process, producing Shukra. Sushruta commentator Dalhanacharya has considered Artava in females as Shukra, as it is meant for conception. Therefore, he has considered Artava as Shukra in females. Vagbhata clarified that Shukra secreted by woman is useless for fertilization. [6]

It is worth noting that during Shukrapradurbhav, some changes in mind and body also start to appear like hair growth on pubic and axillary region, shyness etc. Artava is an essential factor for conception in females, gives strength to Shukra and is responsible for strength and complexion. This means that Artava and Shukra are different.

Stri-shukra and Shukra dhatu

Stri-shukra and Shukra dhatu both are very different. Because Shukra dhatu is responsible for fertilization (reproduction), but Stri-shukra is useless for it. [7] Bhavamishra has put forth the theory of eighth Dhatu in female. He has explained Artava as seventh Dhatu and Shukra as eighth Dhatu. However, he has also not mentioned its location, attributes etc. [8]

Chakrapani quoting opinion of others writes that few erudite accept development of moustache as Malā of Shukra, even women would have the moustache due to presence of Shukra, and however Charaka does not accept this. Moreover, Shukra of females does not take part in fertilization.

Sushrutacharya describes Moolasthana of Shukravaha Srotas as Stan and Vrishana. [9] In female, breast develops at puberty. While in males, it is rudimentary. Shukra Pravartan and Stanya Pravartan Hetu are mostly at the psychological level. Considering Dalhanacharya’s opinion, that Artava is Shukra, the relation between Stan and Shukra becomes clear. According to the classical texts, during pregnancy, Artava is blocked and therefore it rises upwards and splits into two parts- One forms the placenta and the other nourishes the breasts. [10]

Shukradhatu in Children

Children will have Shukra in dormant stage. This is compared to buds of flowers, which have hidden fragrance in them. The visible appears when children reach adulthood. [11]

Properties of Shukradhatu

The Shukra which is unctuous, dense, slimy, sweet, nonirritating & white (transparent) like a crystal is to be known as pure or normal. [12]

1. Smell of pure Shukra is like honey. [13]
2. Colour of Shukra is like oil or honey. [14]
3. It is liquid in nature.
4. Physiological measure of Shukradhatu is half Anjali. [15]
Functions of Shukradhatu

Principle function of Shukradhatu is to reproduction with sustenance & nourishment of the body. It gets ejaculated smoothly. It creates softness in the mind. It gives strength to the body. It arouses a man for reproduction. Reproduction is not local function of testes to produce the sperm and penis to get erected at sexual act & ejaculation. It is function of entire body, mind & intention towards the sexual act. Therefore support of this Dhatus, Shukradharakala, is present all over the body. It forms foetus and its sex, It can produce hereditary defects, It is responsible for betterment of skin texture. Shukradhatu gives rise to valour & courageous, makes a man amorously disposed towards female sex and increases his strength and amativeness. A person, who has Shukra dhatu in healthy state, has a brightness of confidence with eyes and presence of glow on their skin.

Upadhatu of Shukradhatu

Sharangdhar was the lone compendium to mention Upadhatu of Shukradhatu. In his opinion, Oja is the Upadhatu of Shukradhatu.

Mala of Shukradhatu

Charak-samhita and Sushrut samhita take no Mala of Shukradhatu due to its purity. Asatang hridaya states ‘Oja’ as Mala of Shukradhatu.

Characteristics of Shukradhatu Sara Individuals

Individuals having excellence of Shukradhatu are characterized by mild looking, pleasant look; their eyes are as if filled by milk, always happy, their teeth are set equally, are unctuous, look round, close to each other; their voice and color is pleasant. Their pelvic region is broad and they are daring to females. They enjoy females. They are very attractive, strong and healthy; enjoy progeny, wealth, power and status. Women love such individuals; they are strong & endowed with happiness, power, honor & children. These individuals have unctuous, tightly set white teeth and nails. They have strong desires and fertile.

Symptoms of Shukradhatu Disorders

Shukra vriddhi laxanas (symptoms of increased Shukra dhatu)

1. Increased desire for sex
2. Hardening of semen
3. Excessive semen flow with increased prostatic secretions but low sperm content
4. Premature ejaculation
5. Premature Orgasm

Shukra kshaya Laxanas (Symptoms of decreased Shukra dhatu)

1. Dry mouth
2. Body ache
3. Exhaustion
4. Impotency
5. Difficulty in ejaculation of semen
6. Pain in testes and penis
7. Burning sensations in testes and penis
8. Ejaculating little quantity of semen after painful coitus.

Effect of Rasayan and Vajikaran on Shukra Dhatu & on Health

Rasayana Chikitsa of Ayurveda is in vogue since antiquity. The specific actions of Rasayana drugs (Ashwagandha, Shatavari, Shilajit etc.) in the Poshaka Rasa level (nutrient supplement), Agni level (metabolic appreciation) and Srotas level (tissue nourishment) are well acceptable. Some Rasayana Drugs may act directly on specific Dhatus, e.g. Vrishya, Balya drugs directly acts on Shukra Dhatu and results in the production of Shukra. Good numbers of Rasayana drugs have shown immunomodulatory activity to boost up or restore functional immunity in response to defense mechanism. The Rasayana drugs have also shown tissue and disease specific immunomodulatory activity. These Rasayana drugs not only play a role in immunity but also exhibits its anti-stress, inotropic and antioxidant activity which helps in the quality-of-life (QOL) improvement as observed in patients.

Ashstang Ayurveda honors Shukra as the supreme body tissue because of its generative property. Therefore, for intimate satisfaction and for better progeny the Dhatu should be in good state. Vajikaran tantra is that branch of Ashstang Ayurveda that is concerned with all types of physical, and psychological sexual problems like impotence, libido, poor erection and early ejaculation in the males as well as sterility and frigidity in the females. The Vajikaran drugs (Aswagandha, Kavach, Shatwari etc) help in giving strength and vigour to the Dhatu thus strengthening the reproductive potentiality.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Human being has seven Dhatus and it is made up of various microscopic cells. Despite the fact that all these Dhatus have their exact locations in the body but they are present in subtle form in every cell. One cannot confuse Shukra Dhatu to reproductive system in males, because Shukra is a Dhatu which is vital for sustenance of body and it provides nutrition for next factor, i.e. Ojas.

Shukra is the Dhatu which is best among all seven Dhatu. Etiology of this word itself explains the importance of this Dhatu. This Dhatu is pure, excellent part of all Dhatu. Shukra is the word originated from Shucha Dhatu, which means white, pure and excellent. Synonyms of Shukradhatu are Tej, Ret, Bijam, Virayam, and Indriyam. Shukradhatu is present in entire part of the body. Principle organ of Shukravaha Srotas is testis & penis. Shukradhatu which is located in entire body is
expressed when he gets sexual desire. As ghee is in hidden form and has to be extracted by some means; Shakra of human is in hidden form in entire body and has to be extruded by sexual desires. Shukradhatu is an important entity because it takes part in fertilization & produces the same species. By the union of Shakra & Shonita new zygote is formed. It is essential factor in the reproduction.

As every Dhatu is located in entire part of the body, Shukradhatu is also occupies the whole body. When person gets excited because of sexual urge, determination & amorous mental attitude, the semen comes out from entire body through pores to testical. This ejaculation of semen takes place because of heat that is produced during the physical exercise involved at the time of sexual intercourse. This heat causes melting of semen. The individuals having the excellence of Shukradhatu enjoy with all qualities described in characteristics of Shukrasara. They never face the problem of Shukradusti (pathology of Shukradhatu). Shukrasara (not having excellence of Shukradhatu) persons are prone to develop the infertility. These persons should be treated with the Rasayana and Vajikarana Chikitsa (Rejuvenation).

It is an important entity because it directly takes part in reproduction. Deficiency or vitiation of Shukradhatu directly affect on the reproduction hence vitiation of Shukradhatu should be avoided. In the society most of person with abnormal Shukradhatu are observed as discourage, because in such patients function of Shukradhatu is not properly carried out. The measure of Shukradhatu is half Anjali so it should be maintained with proper diet. Pure Shukra dhatu is soft, slimy & liquid in nature. Smell of this Dhatu is like honey. It is also non-irritant. The Individuals having excellence of Shukradhatu are popular in women & they have good physical & sexual strength. These persons are endowed with happiness, health, wealth, honour & progeny. It is pure Dhatu hence; it does not have any waste product. Therefore, it is important entity for the sustenance, nourishment & especially for reproduction. Shukradhatu is the end product of Dhatu parinamana (formation of Dhatu), so it is considered as an Essence of all Dhatu. Hence, its proportion in the body has to be maintained within normal limits to keep body and mind in healthy state by consuming nutritious foods and practicing healthy sexual life.

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