**PRAKRITE ANALYSIS AND ITS CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Prakriti* is defined as the state of an individual in its natural form. Ayurveda classifies people on the basis of *Prakriti* as every person is supposed to have a fixed *Prakriti* that is formulated by the condition of *Tridosha* at the time of union of sperm and ovum inside the uterus. Predominance of any one, two, or all the three *Dosha* (body humors- *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) determines the *Prakriti* of an individual. So *Prakriti* refers to genetically determined anatomical, physiological and psychological constitution of an individual. *Prakriti* also determines the response of an individual to environmental factors, drugs and susceptibility to diseases making it one of the earliest known concepts of preventive and personalized or genomic medicine. Opposite to the *Prakriti* is *Vikriti* which means diseased state of an individual. Until the normal is not known, abnormality cannot be found, so *Prakriti* plays an important role in determining *Vikriti*. Acharya Charaka has mentioned *Dashavidha Pariksha* in which *Prakriti* analysis is done first and *Vikriti* analysis next to understand the nature and severity of disease, reaction of body to the drugs (pharmacogenomics), selection of drugs and their doses, prognosis of the disease and preventive measures such as diet, diurnal and seasonal regimes. So *Prakriti* emphasizes on the individuality and plays an important role in diagnosis, preventive medicine, and therapeutics.

**KEYWORDS:** *Prakriti, Vikriti, Dashavidha Pariksha, Dosha, Genomic medicine, Pharmacogenomics.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The term *Prakriti* is derived from two Sanskrit words ‘Pr’ and ‘Kri’. *Pr* means ‘First’ and the *Kri* means ‘Creation’. So *Prakriti* is termed as the ‘first creation’. The term *Prakriti* also means ‘nature’ or state of an individual in its natural form.

Ayurveda considers *Panchamahabhuta* (*Aakasha, Vayu, Teja, Jala* and *Prithvi*) to be the basic constituents of this physical universe including the human body. These *Mahabhuta* manifests into *Tridosha* (*Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*). Though all three *Dosha* exist in every human being, one is dominant based on which an individual’s *Prakriti* is determined. *Prakriti* are discrete phenotypes and they are determined on the basis of physical, psychological, physiological and behavioral traits, and are independent of social, ethnic and geographical variables.[1,2]

*Prakriti* of human being depends on genetic and acquired factors. The genetic constitution depends upon *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum), while acquired constitution depends on environmental factors like age, race, heredity, climate, season, and region.

*Prakriti* is an important concept of Ayurveda that explains individuality. It expresses unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of *Dosha* right from birth. *Prakriti* makes every person unique therefore no two persons can be exactly identical. Anatomical, physiological and psychological characteristics differ from one person to other person depending on his/her *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* remains constant for each individual throughout his/her lifetime.

**Prakriti formation of an individual**

According to Acharya Sushruta, formation of *Prakriti* takes place by the condition of *Tridosha* at the time of union of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) in the *Garbhshaya* (womb) of mother. Predominance of any one, two, or all the three *Dosha* (body humors- *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*) determines the characteristics features of the future child as *Ekadosha Prakriti* (*Vataja, Pittaja* and *Kaphaja*), *Dvandvaja* (*Vatapitta, Vatakapha, Kaphapitta*), and *Samamishra* (*Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha* in equal proportions).[3]

According to Acharya Charaka *Panchamahabhuta* and *Chetana* (soul) unite to form *Purusha* and the nature of this *Sharira* is known as *Prakriti*. [4]
Factors affecting formation of Prakriti

Factors which play direct or indirect role in the formation of Prakriti are as-

- Garbhakalaja Bhava (Antenatal)
- Jatiprasakti Bhava (Postnatal)
- ShukraShonitaPrakriti (Characters of Sperm-ovum)
- Kala-Garbashaya Prakriti (Time of intercourse, fertilization and Age /nature of uterus)
- Matura Aharavihara prakriti (Influence of mother’s diet/behavior)
- Mahabutavikara Prakriti (Influence of Akasha, Vayu, Teja, Jala & Prithvi)
- Jatiprasakta Bhava (Caste/Racial effect)
- Kulprasakta Bhava (Familial)
- Desha anupatini Prakriti (Demographic effect)
- Vya’anupatini Prakriti (Age effect)
- Kala anupatini Prakriti (Seasonal effect)
- Pratyatmaniyyata Prakriti (Self/Idiosyncracy)

Types of Prakriti-

- Shaaririka Prakriti (Physical constitution)
- Manasa Prakriti (Psychological constitution)

1. Vata
2. Pitta
3. Kapha
4. Vata-Pitta
5. Vata-Kapha
6. Pitta-Kapha
7. Vata-Pitta-Kapha

1. Sattvika
2. Rajasika
3. Tamasika
4. Sattva-Rajasika
5. Sattva-Tamasika
6. Rajas-Tamasika
7. Samaguna Prakriti
Characteristics of Shaaririka Prakriti

1. Features of Vata Prakriti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Manifestations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruksha (Dry)</td>
<td>Ununctuous, emaciation, and dwarfness of the body; long drawn, dry low broken obstructed and hoarse voice; always keeping awake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laghu (Light)</td>
<td>Light and inconsistent gait, action, food and movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chala (Mobile)</td>
<td>Unstable joints, eyes, eyebrows, jaws, lips, tongue, head, shoulder, hands and legs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baha (Abundance)</td>
<td>Talkativeness, abundance in tendons and veins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shighra (Swift)</td>
<td>Quick in initiating actions, getting irritated and the onset of morbid manifestations, quick in affliction with fear, quick in likes and dislikes, quick in understanding and forgetting things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shita (Cold)</td>
<td>Intolerance for cold things; often getting afflicted with cold, shivering, and stiffness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parusha (Rough)</td>
<td>Roughness in the hair of the head, face and other parts of the body; nails, teeth, face, hands, and feet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viashada (Non-Slime)</td>
<td>Cracking of limbs and organs, production of cracking sound in joints when they move.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These persons are endowed with lesser quantity of strength, span of life, procreation, accessories of life and wealth.

2. Features of Pitta Prakriti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Manifestations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ushna (Hot)</td>
<td>Intolerance for hot things, having hot face, tender body of port-wine mark, freckles, black moles, excessive hunger and thirst; quick advent of wrinkles; graying of hair and baldness, presence of some soft and brown hair on the face, head, and other parts of the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikshana (Sharp)</td>
<td>Sharp physical strength, strong digestive power, intake of food and drink in large quantity; inability to face difficult situations and gluton habits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drava (Liquid)</td>
<td>Looseness and softness of joints and muscles; voiding of sweat, urine and feces in large quantity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visra (Foul smell)</td>
<td>Putrid smell of axilla, mouth, head and body in excess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amla/Katu (Pungent/Bitter)</td>
<td>Insufficiency of semen, sexual desire and procreation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These persons are endowed with moderate strength, moderate span of life, moderate spiritual and materialistic knowledge, wealth and the accessories of life.

3. Features of Kapha Prakriti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Manifestations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snigdha (Unctuous)</td>
<td>Unctuousness of organs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shlakṣhna (Smooth)</td>
<td>Smoothness of organs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mridu (Soft)</td>
<td>Pleasing appearance, tenderness and clarity of complexion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhura (Sweet)</td>
<td>Increase in the quantity of semen, desire for sex-act, and number of procreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara (Firm)</td>
<td>Firmness, compactness and stability of the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra (Dense)</td>
<td>Plumpness and roundness of all organs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manda (Slow)</td>
<td>Slow in action, intake of food and movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guru (Heavy)</td>
<td>Non-slippery and stable gait with the entire sole of the feet pressing against the earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimita (Stable)</td>
<td>Slowness in initiating actions, getting irritated and morbid manifestations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shita (Cold)</td>
<td>Lack of intensity in hunger, thirst, heat, and perspiration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vijila (Viscous)</td>
<td>Firmness and compactness in joints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accha (Clear)</td>
<td>Happiness in the look and face; happiness and softness of complexion and voice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These persons are endowed with the excellence of strength, wealth, knowledge, energy, peace and longevity.

4. Features of Dvandvaja Prakriti

The two Dosha prakriti are characterized by the combination of the manifestation of respective Dosha.

5. Features of Sama Prakriti

Samadhatu Prakriti is characterized by combination of the manifestation of all the Doshas in a state of equilibrium. These persons are endowed with the qualities of all the three single Dosha Prakriti.

Importance of Prakriti

1) Promotion of Health: Ayurveda encourages a person to take foods & indulge in those activities which are opposite to his/her Prakriti to live a healthy life style. The rejuvenative therapies like Rasayana and Vajikarana benefit most when they are administered according to one’s Prakriti.
2) *Agni* status of individual: Acharya Charaka has mentioned four types of Agni (Digestive fire) according to one’s *Prakriti.*

- Vishmagni (Disturbed) in Vata Prakriti
- Tikshnagni (Increased) in Pitta Prakriti
- Mandagni (Decreased) in Kapha Prakriti
- Samagni (Normal) in Samadosha Prakriti

3) Determination the Bala (Strength)- The Comparative strength of different individuals can be decided by the type of *Prakriti*. The Kapha Prakriti persons are stronger than Pitta and Vata Prakriti persons. Determination of strength is important while treating a person.

4) Susceptibility to disease/Predictive Medicine: Each *Prakriti* type is prone to specific diseases. *Prakriti* determines proneness of an individual for *Dosha* specific diseases. For example, Kapha Prakriti persons are more prone to Kaphaja vikara like Agnimandhya, Pratishyaya, Medoroga, Prameha etc. similarly Vata Prakriti persons are more prone to Gulma, Aaśtopa, Sandhiyagata etc and Pittaja Prakriti persons are more prone to diseases like Amlapitta, Pandu, Kaamlo, Raktaśipta etc.

The various observations show that there is more susceptibility of Vata Prakriti individuals to anxiety neurosis, thyrotoxicosis and tuberculosis, Pitta Prakriti individuals to hypertension, peptic ulcer, bronchial asthma and rheumatoid arthritis and Kapha Prakriti individuals to diabetes mellitus, obesity, hypertension and ischemic heart diseases.

Vataja, Pittaja and Kaphaja diseases are a little difficult to treat in persons belonging to Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti respectively. In view of this fact, the different diseases to which an individual is predisposed can be predicted timely and may be prevented or postponed by appropriate diet, drugs or regimen.

5) Diagnosis of diseases: Dashvīdhoparikṣa has been mentioned by Acharya Charaka while diagnosing the strength of the diseased person. *Prakriti* analysis is first one to be done while examining a patient.

6) Prognosis of diseases: If the causative *Dosha* of an ailment is same as the *Prakriti* of the diseased person, the disease becomes *Krichrasadhyā* i.e. difficult to cure. Similarly if the vitiated *Dosha* is different from one’s *Prakriti*, it is very easy to treat.

7) Management of diseases/ Individualized Medicine

Acharya Charaka has mentioned ‘Prati Purusha siddhanta’ considering one’s *Prakriti* and other factors specific to the diseased person while treating his/her ailment. The knowledge of *Prakriti* helps in drawing a line of treatment for diseased person. E.g. In *Amaṭajāvayādhi* like *Jvara*, for Kaphaja person one can adopt complete *Apatarpāna Chikitsā* whereas in case of *Vataja* person that cannot be adopted completely.

8) Determination of Drug doses – The dose of the medicine is decided according to one’s *Prakriti*. In general the *Alpa* (minimum), *Madhya* (moderate) and *Pravara* (maximum) dose of medicine are adopted in *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha Prakriti* individuals respectively.

9) Preventive Medicine- In Ayurveda *Dinacharya* (Diurnal regime) and *Rituacharya* (Seasonal regimes) have been advised on the basis of *Prakriti*. The person can adopt these regimes as per need of *Prakriti* to keep body healthy and *Dosha* in equilibrium state. For example Kapha Prakriti persons need more exercise, *Laghuāhara* to keep their body fit and they should avoid *Divasvapna*, whereas Vata Prakriti persons are advised to take nutritious and heavy food, do less exercise and can do *Divasvapna*.

Ayurveda advocates extensive preventive measures in terms of *Sadvrita Svasthavrita, Dinacarya, Rituucharya* etc. By determining the *Prakriti* of every individual, their health can be maintained by advocating them *Pathyā Ahara* (Favorable foods and drinks) and *Vihara* (behavior and physical activities) and simultaneously restricting them to take *Apatyā Ahara* (Unfavorable food and drinks) and *Vihara* (Behavior and physical activities).

10) Genomic Medicine- The concept of *Prakriti* and its relationship with genomics was hypothesized over a decade ago. Subsequent studies have attempted to correlate *Prakriti* classification with genetic information and association of single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in *HLA*.

- CD markers for various blood cells
- DNA methylation alterations
- Risk factors of cardiovascular or inflammatory diseases have been reported.

A preliminary study suggests that the *Prakriti* classification, as a foundation for the practice of Ayurveda, has a genetic basis and does provide clues for further studies.

CONCLUSION

*Prakriti* is an important concept in Ayurveda to understand the nature and severity of disease, reaction of body to the drugs (pharmacogenomics), selection of drugs and their doses, prognosis of the disease and preventive measures such as diet, diurnal and seasonal regimes. *Prakriti* also determines the response of an individual to environmental factors, drugs and susceptibility to diseases making it one of the earliest known concepts of predictive, preventive and personalized or genomic medicine. So *Prakriti* emphasizes on the individuality and plays an important role in diagnosis, preventive medicine, and therapeutics.

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