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### Importance Of *Vata Dosha* And Its *Aatma Roopas* (Cardinal Symptoms) In Maintaining Health And Balance In Life

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#### ABSTRACT: -

*Ayurveda*, The Science of Life is often called as The Mother of All Healing. It emphasizes on preventive techniques and encourages the maintenance of health through which *sukha* (happiness) can be attained and *dukha* (miseries) can be abolished. According to *Ayurveda* everything which exist in universe is made up of *Panchmahabutas* (the five elements) *Aakash*, *Vayu*, *Tejas*, *Jala*, *Prithvi*. Therefore, every concept of *Ayurveda* is predicted and described on the basis of *Panchmahabhutas*. The *Tridoshas* (*vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*), one of the basic pillars of *Ayurveda* represent the presence of *Panchmahabhuta* in our body. These are the primary functional energies in our body that our aligned with the elements of nature. Similarly, *Doshas* are the main essential contributory factors for the causation of disease. No disease manifests without the participation of *Doshas* in the *samprapti* (pathogenesis). Among the three basic humors, *Vata* plays an important role for establishing equilibrium of health in our body. This is because no activity in our body occurs without involvement and motivation of *Vata Dosha*. Thus, *Vata* is master of all the activities in human body. Hence in this article an attempt has been made to understand the physiological properties (*Gunas*) and cardinal symptoms (*Aatma roopas*) of *Vata Dosha*.

**Keywords:** *Panchmahabhuta*, *Vata Dosha*, *Vata Gunas*, *Aatma roopas*.



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## INTRODUCTION

Ayu is considered as the combination of *Sharir*, *Indriya*, *Sattva* and *Aatma*.<sup>[1]</sup> Root cause of this *Sharir* is *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*.<sup>[2]</sup> These *Doshas* are classified into two types that is *Sharirik Dosha* and *Mansika Dosha*. *Sharirik Doshas* are *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, they are called as the *Tristhuna* by Acharyas.<sup>[3]</sup> These three energies play significant role in maintenance of health or wellbeing and disease or illness. Since everything in the universe is made up of *Panchmahabhuta*.<sup>[4]</sup> Human body is said to be *pancha mahabhut vikara samudayatmaka* associated with life that is *Chaitanya*. These *Tridosha* shows the existence of five natural elements in the human body because they are formed by permutation and combination of one or more elements of nature. These are the unique feature in Ayurveda because they are the first requirement for treating the ailments. *Doshas* can be scrutinized as the form of dynamic energy, then *Vata Dosha* can rightly be equated as kinetic energy. Among the three *Doshas*, *Vata Dosha* has its prime importance. *Vata* is the combination of *Aakash*(ether) and *Vayu*(air) element. Though air and ether have their independent authority still both these elements participate in the synchronized way to enable *Vata* to function properly. *Sushruta* has called it as “*Swayambhu bhagwana*”.<sup>[5]</sup> As it is responsible for all macro and micro physiological functions and movements in our body. The word *Vata* is originated from ‘*va*’ *dhatu* which means *gati* and *gandhana*.<sup>[6]</sup> *Gati* means movement and *gandhana* implies *utsaha* that is enthusiasm for doing the work. *Vata* has the *Rajas* quality and with its help it propels and mobilizes things in the body.<sup>[7]</sup> If human body is considered as machine, then *Vata* is the remote control which controls all the activities in it. *Vata* is the master of the body orchestra as the other two *doshas*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are dependent on it. As stated

by Acharya Sharangdhara *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Mala* and *Dhatu* of the body are lame. They are carried by *Vata* from one part of the body to other just like clouds are moved by winds to different places.<sup>[8]</sup> *Vata Dosha* can be identified in terms of neurological and endocrinal activities in human body.

### **Gunas (Properties) Of Vata Dosha<sup>[9]</sup>**

*Raukshya*(*Rookshata*)-dryness, for example dryness of lips, cracked foot, dry skin, dry eye syndrome etc. All these are the features due to *Vata Dosha*.

*Laaghava*(*laghu*)- lightness, as *Vayu* and *Aakash* are the main component of *Vata Dosha*, it is naturally very light. For example, at the end of digestion process, body feels light. This lightness is due to *Vata*.

*Shaitya*(*sheetata*)- coldness, as it is interconnected with dryness. Like, during winter, skin tends to feel dry. Pain is the symptom of *vata* and in winter it is felt more.

*Kharatva*-roughness, *rookshata* and *kharta* exist with each other. Roughness of lips, rough cracked foot, rough skin etc. are the characteristic of *vata* activity.

*Sukshma*(minuteness)- *Vata* being made of *Aakash* and *vayu mahabhoota*, it can penetrate to all the body channels, into deepest tissues.

*Chal* (movement)- increase in movement is due to *Vata*, for example, movement of fluid, nutrients etc inside the gastrointestinal tract is due to *Vata Dosha*.

### **Role Of Disease Specific Or Cardinal Symptoms**

Extrinsic factors cause aggravation of *Doshas* (*Aagantu Dosha*) along with *sara* and *kitta*. *Gunas* of *Aagantu Dosha* will be according to the nature of extrinsic factors. Interaction of these *Doshas* takes place with *Sthanic Doshas* and *Dhatu*s resulting in development of *roga*. Disease develops first in *Aagantu roga* and *Dosha* aggravation takes place from the

*nishthaa-paaka*(metabolism in tissues) according to extrinsic factor. These *Aagantu-Dosha gunas-lakshnas* are explained as *Aatma-roopas* and not all the *gunas* of the *Doshas* are aggravated in a disease.

The *Aatma roopas*-specific symptoms of vitiated *Vata* are-<sup>[10]</sup>

- *Roukshyam*- manifestation of excessive dryness in body parts.
- *Sheetatva*- excessive coldness in the body parts.
- *Laaghava*- excessive lightness in the body parts.
- *Vaishadhyam*- disintegration, looseness of the body components including tissues and organs.
- *Gatitvam*- speedy activities or excessive movements, fluctuant nature.
- *Amurtatvam*- having no shape and structure that is provides no shape and structure to the afflicted components or disappearance or degeneration of the body components leaving behind empty space.
- *Anavasthitatvam*- instability of the body or the body parts which have been afflicted by the vitiated *Vata*.

These are the natural inherent qualities or cardinal symptoms of *Vata Dosha* through which a physician can correctly diagnose the *Vatika* type of diseases.

### **Vikrita Vata Karma**<sup>[11]</sup>

While moving from one part to another part of the body aggravated abnormal *Vata dosha* exhibits symptoms like,

*Sramsas* (ptosis/looseness)

*Bhransa* (dislocation)

*Vyasa* (expanded state or throwing away like involuntary movement)

*Sangha* (obstruction)

*Bheda* (separation/tearing pain)

*Saada* (weakness/depression)

*Harshana* (horripilation/excitation)

*Tarshanam* (dehydration/thirst)

*Kampa*(trembling/shivering)

*Varta*(circular movement)

*Chaala*(motion)

*Toda* (piercing pain)

*Vyadha* (stabbing pain or as if beaten with a stick/aching pain)

*Cheshta*(action)

*Khara*(coarseness)

*Parushya* (roughness)

*Vishada*(non-sliminess)

*Sushira* (porosity)

*Shyaava-aruna varna*

*Kashaya-rasa* (astringent taste)

*Virasa Mukhatva*(tastelessness in mouth)

*Shosha* (emaciation/wasting)

*Shoola*(pain)

*Supti* (acaitanya- numbness)

*Samkocha* (contraction)

*Stambha* (rigidity)

*Khanjta*(lameness)

*Ruk* (continuous pain)

*Anga-bhanga*(shattering pain)

*Spandana* (twitching)

*Veshtana* (as if tied tightly)

The symptom could be manifestation of any of the *Aatma-rupaas* of *Vata* namely *roukshya* (degeneration - metabolic dysfunction), *shaitya* (no energy production), *laaghava* (destructive changes or dysfunction alone due to imbalance) or *vaishadya* (deficient nutrition and oxygen).

## **DISCUSSION**

In *Nija rogas*, *doshas* are involved in the beginning and they cause disease but in *Agantuja rogas* (disease caused by external factors like trauma, burns, effect of poisons etc.) and *Mansika rogas* (mental disease) they get involved in later stages. Involvement of these *Doshas* in the *samprapti* (pathogenesis) of disease, they leave their footmarks in the form of certain symptoms which confirms their involvement in production of that particular disease. These symptoms are called as *Aatma roopas*.<sup>[12]</sup>

*Aatma*- self, own

*Roopas*-symptoms

Hence *Aatma roopas* are the symptoms of a vitiated *Dosha* that are present in a disease caused by that particular *Dosha*. *Aatma roopas* are separate for each *Dosha*. The symptoms of *Vata Dosha* will be predominantly present in a disease, caused by predominantly vitiated *Vata*.

In short the *Aatma roopas* are markers of a *dosha* in the causation of a disease.

When *Vata dosha* participates in the *samprapti* of the disease, it exhibits its *Aatma roopas*. In these diseases *Vata* produces symptomatic effects according to its qualities like *ruksha*(dry), *sheeta*(cold), *laghu*(light) etc.

### VATIC AATMA ROOPAS [13]

TABLE:1

<b><i>Roukshya</i> (kharatva, paarushya)</b>	
<i>Vatic Jwara</i>	<i>Rooksha-aruna-Tvak-aasya-akshi-nakha-mootra-pureeshata</i>
<i>Sandhigata Vata</i>	Degeneration - Active and passive movement painful
<i>Vatic atisaara</i>	Dryness of mouth, protrusion of anus
General	Dryness, <i>Kashaya-aasyatva</i> , <i>Shyaavata</i> , <i>kaarshnyam</i> , constipation (hard stool), continuous pain which increases with slight exertion, hardening (sclerosis), roughness ( <i>Rishya-jihva</i> , fibrosis), hypertrophy ( <i>vyaasa, saada</i> ) .

TABLE:2

<b><i>Shaitya</i> ( decreases energy production and movement)</b>	
<i>Vataanubandha-VataRakta, Vatic shopha</i>	Different kinds of pain or tingling sensations or stiffness ( <i>Harsha, toda, ruk, aayama, shopha, stambha, graha</i> )
Numbness, sensation loss, <i>Anila-moodhata</i> (Saama-vata), pain associated with degenerative changes (+ <i>roukshya</i> ), no bowel motion, pain, dystonia (sustained abnormal posture- <i>aayaama</i> ), rigidity ( <i>stambha</i> ), trembling or shivering on straining.	

TABLE:3

<b><i>Laaghava</i> (loss of karma-saamarthya due to dysfunction or destructive changes)</b>	
Jwara	<i>Pindikodveshta, Bhakshane ashakti, Vepathu, Kshavathu-graha, Bhrama</i>
<i>Arshas, Atisara, Grahnee dosha</i>	<i>Vibaddham upaveshyate</i> (discontinuous & improper bowel motion)
<i>Aanaaha, shoola</i>	<i>Viguna-gati</i> (Radiating pain)
<i>Udaavarta</i>	<i>Pratiloma-gati</i> {produces many <i>vataja rogas</i> }
<i>Mutraaghaat</i>	Caused by <i>vega-rodha</i> ( <i>vega vishama-pravritti</i> )
<i>Vata vyadhi</i>	Hypotonia, loss of strength, cerebellar dysfunction, involuntary movements
<i>Kshataj kasa</i>	Severe joint pain, dyspnoea, <i>svarabheda</i> , tremor, cooing sound of dove is produced, pain on the sides of chest (+ <i>Vaishadya</i> )
<i>Sandhigata vata</i>	Destruction of joint following degeneration

TABLE:4

<i>Vaishadya</i>	
Diminished nourishment & oxygen (or symptoms caused by <i>rasa-rakta</i> dysfunction)	
Depletion of <i>kapha</i> in circulation or in excreta or non-adhesiveness - spreading of toxins in the body. <i>Kapha-shukranut</i> (decreases <i>shukra</i> ).	
Infarction, necrosis, platelet dysfunction (or decrease in platelet count)	
Varicosity, Aneurysm ( <i>Vyaasa</i> ), Rupture of aneurysm, Crepitus, Cracks (loss of integrity of structures)	
Dysfunction due to impaired nourishment or oxygen (anemia, cyanosis, ischaemic atrophy)	
Physical appearance is clear fluid or powder form ( <i>dhoolivat</i> ) as in dandruff or psoriasis. <sup>[14]</sup>	

TABLE:5

<i>Gati (laghu guna)</i>	
<i>Vatic Jwara</i>	<i>Chardi, kaasa, vepathu</i>
<i>Vatic Arshas</i>	<i>Kaasa, shwaasa</i>
<i>Hridgata-vata</i>	<i>Hridh-dravata</i>

TABLE:6

<i>Amoortatva</i> (identified with <i>shabda-sparsha</i> )	
<i>Vatic Kaasa</i>	<i>Mahaavega-ruja-swanam</i>
<i>Vatic Gulma</i>	<i>Amoorttopi moortatvamiva</i>
<i>Karna-naada</i>	<i>Vata in shabdhavaha sira</i>

TABLE:7

<i>Anavasthitatva (Chal-guna)</i>	
<i>Vatic shopha,</i> <i>Anavasthita-cittatva</i>	Unstable <i>Naanaatmaja vata-vyadhi</i>
<i>Vatic Jwara</i>	<i>Aagama-apagama, kshobha-mriduta</i> of <i>Jwara</i>
<i>Vata-Rakta</i>	<i>Bhootva-abhootva pranashyanti punara-</i> <i>avirbhavanti cha</i>

## CONCLUSION

The *Aatma roopas* of the *doshas* are naturally present even in the absence of the disease, but within permissible limits while in pathological conditions during presence of disease the same symptoms are revealed in severe form and are very much tinted in the disease showing the participation of that specific *dosha* in the pathogenesis of that particular disease. As above details of *vatic aatma roopas* have been discussed, knowledge of these benefits a physician to identify and diagnose the involvement of *Vata* in the causation, initiation, development and manifestation of *Vatic*

*vikara*. These also helps in treating the vitiated *Vata dosha* by adopting *Dosha pratyaneeka chikitsa* against *Vata dosha* even without a detailed knowledge of other factors of the *samprapti* (pathogenesis). Thus, initial treatment of the disease can be started on the basis of knowledge of *Aatma roopas*.

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