

Astrogenetics

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Astrogenetics is the ancient science that deals with the planetary influence on human birth and life.

Astrogenetics is a science that deals with the influence of planetary movements and astrological influences on human birth, health and life. This is actually a part of Indian Ayurveda, which is century old. Astrogenetics has now become a subject of research by the Indian experts. As per Ayurveda, Astrogenetics is the science of life and it deals with the health of human beings as well as all life forms. Astrogenetics covers the remedy, maintenance and prevention of diseases and also recommends the development of human beings.

Astrogenetics has perceptiveness for the development and up gradation of life forms. Present generation may find it amazing. Astrogenetics is a very popular subject of research to all experts. Astrogenetics is an ancient science that offers explanation of change of sex, which is called 'Pumsavana', where the fetus in the mother's womb can be converted from a male to female or the vice-versa.

Astrogenetics gives the concept of genetic inheritance of planetary positions, cosmic orientations and karmic obligations. If the astrological chart of the whole family is studied, an astrological coherence can be observed in them.

Grahachikitsa, Psychiatry

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Grahachikitsa is a branch of Ashtang Ayurved that treats mental diseases believed to spring from apparently unidentified.

Grahachikitsa (psychology and psychiatry), a terminology derived from the word graha, is a specialized branch of Ashtang Ayurved that is concerned with the treatment of delirious conditions of the mind resulting from seemingly unknown causes. Such diseases of the mind or psyche were believed by some

to be external manifestations of the invasions of notorious bhutas (supernatural forces or evil spirits). For this reason Grahachikitsa was also known as bhut-vidya. These supernatural powers had different names in popular jargon --- Bhut-khet, pretatma, samandh, pishachcha, vetal are a few of them. The ancient Indians believed that these forces are actually spirits of unfortunate people who have died without fulfilling one or some of their wishes. As a result they try to possess the bodies and minds of mentally weak people to accomplish their incomplete tasks. The possessed person then suffers from psychological disorders and is subjected to Grahachikitsa.

Apart from the evil spirits, the ancient Indians also believed in both the conducive and the adverse effects of the graha (planets), the tare (stars), the rashichakra (zodiac), the grahan (eclipse) and the sankramana (movement of the sun from one rashi or zodiac month to another). Along with these, grahadasha (bad luck), grahapeda (trouble caused by unfavourable stars) and amavasya-pournima (new moon-full moon) were also regarded as the causative factors of mental disorders. Some believed that the transgressions which one might have committed in one's previous birth trouble one in one's current birth. In general, the belief was that these superpowers, whether bhutas or grahas or previous sins are not visible to the human eye and can take human beings under their control. The treatment of all these ailments were included within the ken of the practitioner of Grahachikitsa.

In short, Grahachikitsa is the science that deals with causes and ill effects that are less physical and more mental. Grahachikitsa advocates that the patient needs a devrishi or a tantrik (person who knows how to tackle these superpowers) to be able to get rid of them.

Thus this branch deals with all sorts of problems that cannot be properly explained in terms of dosh (basic body constituents), dhatu (body tissues) or mala (body wastes). The ancient treatment procedure under Grahachikitsa involved pleasing the bad spirits. Sacrificing a rooster or a goat to satisfy angry devils, offering ornaments to the Gods and prarthana-mantra pathan-pooja-shanti (prayers and ritual performances) were part of the treatment. Yadnya (fumigation performed by using disinfectant plants) and house warming, aimed at keeping the atmosphere germ-free, were socially accepted forms of treatment for psychiatric problems. All this was done to improve the atmospheric conditions surrounding the psychologically disturbed person. In addition to these we have other practised forms of treatment like the use of herbs, the control of diet and yogic therapies like meditation and pranavama.

To some modern Ayurvedic practitioners, bhuta stands for microscopic organisms such as virus, bacteria that are not visible to the bare eyes. In recent terminology Grahachikitsa can be considered to be the treatment of idiopathic diseases where the exact cause of disease is not known. In most cases illness is

caused by the disturbance of mind, where rajas (passion) and tamas (unawareness) are supposed to be the causative factors. These problems can be correlated to those with which modern psychiatry deals.

To summarize, Grahachikitsa deals with psychological and psychiatric problems. It tries to alleviate mental disturbances cropping from unknown or rarely known causes. The healing procedure ranges from satisfying gods and devils to a more therapeutic treatment of the person concerned.

Theory of the Tridoshas

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The theory of the tridoshas in ayurveda revolves around the three elements of body viz Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

According to the beliefs there are three elements in the body, which cause diseases. These can be said as vata, pitta, and kapha. They hold the pride of place among the body constituents. It would be relevant here to point out that the doshas are not defects as some translators of Ayurvedic texts have erroneously assumed.

Vata: All the human beings are made up of space and air, with some light, water, and earth thrown in. Vata helps to transmit perceptions to the mind and body and maintains the body's natural balance. The energy, which is used to transmit the outside world to our inner selves when become imbalanced then diseases, sets in.

Pitta: This is the energy, which is responsible for vision, digestion, heat, hunger, thirst, happiness and intelligence. When this element gets imbalanced it results in apathy, depression, dehydration, digestive problems, and weight gain or loss.

Kapha: It is the disease, which is due to the lack of conserving and stabilizing the body. Commonly they are called as viruses or bugs.

Vyaadhi is usually known as disease. It is the state of the being when the person is full of discomfort or pain. All these are caused by an imbalance in one of the three elements. These diseases are treated according to the classification of trauma.

When any of the three doshas becomes excessively agitated or increases disproportionately in relation to the others, an imbalance is created, and thus disease results. The loss of dynamic equilibrium may be due to the excessive or deficient use of the five sense organs. These sense organs can be named as the ears, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose. They regulate the action of body, mind, or speech and also time, that is, the different seasons.

The restoration of health would then depend on regaining the balance among the three doshas. That balance depends on the consumption of environmental matter in the right form, proportion, combination, and at the right time. When the physician becomes sure of the nature of the imbalance of the doshas, he prescribes a substance, namely, a drug or a diet, which will correct the disequilibria. Everything in nature has relevance for medicine and that is why Ayurveda has collected a fund of data on the therapeutic effect of all kinds of natural substances. Seasons, plants, natural substances, and constituents of the body are all integrated into a complex theory of physical health as equilibrium of somatic and environmental elements.

The theory of tridoshas has led the ancient teachers to make a classification of human constitutions or deha-prakritis. The predominance of one dosha determines the constitution that a person has. If there is an excess of vata, it results in a person having a vatala constitution. And in the same way the predominance of the other two doshas gives rise to pittala or shleshmala dehaprakriti. The other four constitutions depend on the multiplication of more than one dosha. The deha-prakritis are predetermined body constitutions that a person is born with. And there is as such no change in their basic structure till one dies.

Each type of body constitution or deha-prakriti has some peculiar dietary and other habits, and a predictable response to drugs. It is one of the cardinal rules of Ayurveda that medicine cannot be prescribed for a patient unless the physician has checked the patient. The physician should diagnose the patient first. A drug that helps one type of constitution will not help a different deha-prakriti. It is imperative to understand that in Ayurveda, the true drug is the one, which cures a patient without producing any side effects. Ayurveda maintains that illness results from the disturbance of the equilibrium among the three doshas and other body constituents, and any loss of that balance in an individual makes him or her susceptible to manifold disorders.

Role of the Doshas

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Ayurveda says that for a healthy living the role of the doshas are immense.

Ayurveda says that the lack of balance among the doshas, dhatus, and malas results in disease. The body constituents can be checked to make a clear vision about the whole thing.

The Role of Vata: The normal function of vata or vayu is to sustain the body, and that is why it is the originator of every kind of action in the body. It has been called the Tantra-Yantra Dhara. This can be described as the one, which maintains or keeps the human machinery and its parts in good shape. Vayu occupies the pride of place among the three doshas. Just as the wind controls the direction of the clouds, so does vayu control the functioning of pitta and kapha.

There are five kinds of vata or vayu and these are prana, udana, vyana, samana, and apana. Prana vayu is responsible for breathing and the swallowing of food. It is also responsible for the functioning of the heart and the parts of the body directly connected with the heart. Not only does it maintain the functioning of the heart. It also sustains the mind, the senses, the intellect, the arteries, the veins, and the nerves. Udana vayu is responsible both for the production of the various sounds and speech, and the action and the effort to keep up the strength of the body, mind, memory, and intellect. Samana vayu helps in the action of the digestive enzymes. It separates the essences vital for the nourishment of the body and sends the wastes to the large intestines. Apana vayu is situated in the lower part of the digestive tract, the urinary system, and the reproductive organs. Its function is to hold the faeces, urine, menses, and semen up to a normal period. After that it expels them through the various orifices of the body. This vayu is one of the most important factors in the body since its proper functioning keeps a person healthy. In an abnormal state, it moves upwards and depresses the diaphragm, giving rise to a sense of acute discomfort. Vyana vayu flows through the whole body, carrying the nutrients with it. It helps the excretion of perspiration, and controls the opening and closing of the eyelids, as also other movements of the body.

The Role of Pitta: Like the vayus, pittas are also of five kinds and these are pachak, ranjaka, sadhaka, alochaka, and bhrajaka. Pachaka pitta is mainly responsible for the digestion of food. It divides the food juice into the useful and waste parts, and then helps the other four types of pittas to function normally in the body. Ranjaka pitta, as the very name indicates, adds colour to the food juices when they travel from the stomach to the liver. Sadhaka pitta has its seat in the heart and this is also known as the finest

of all the pittas. It helps in the normal functioning of the intellect and memory. Alochaka pitta is responsible for the maintenance of normal vision in the eyes. Bhrajaka pitta is situated in the skin of the body and is responsible for the normal pigmentation of the skin.

The Role of Kapha: Like the vayus and the pittas, the kaphas are also of five types. The first of these is kledaka. This is responsible for moistening the food in the stomach. It nourishes the other kaphas by its special humid properties. Avalambaka is the second kapha. It has its seat in the thorax, and protects the heart from excessive heat by its cooling influence and gives a special power to the heart. The bodhaka kapha moistens any substance, which comes in contact with the tongue and helps the individual to recognize the taste of substances ingested. Its seat extends from the root of the tongue to the throat. It plays a part in increasing appetite. The fourth kapha, the tarpaka, cools the sense organs of sight and hearing. The shleshaka kapha is situated in the joints of the body. It maintains them in good order so that the various parts of the body not only remain firm, but also have the flexibility to move as well.

The Dhatus: The dhatus are constituents, which comprise the basic structure of the body. They are seven in number. They are: rasa or essence of food, rakta or blood, mamsa or muscle tissue, meda or fat tissue, asthi or bones, majja or bone marrow, and shukra or sperm in males and ova in females.

Malas or the Wastes of the Body: In addition to the doshas and the dhatus there is one more constituent of the body. It can be named as malas or the waste products. The malas are the byproducts of the various dhatus present in the body.

The chief malas can be mentioned as follows

mutra or urine

shakrit or faeces

sweda or perspiration

Other malas can be named as pitta; purisha sneha or faecal fat; prajanan malas or secretion of the genitalia; and kha malas or secretions of the various orifices of the body such as the ear, nose, mouth, and so on. Malas play a supporting note while they are in the body. They are eliminated once their supporting role is finished.

The concept of malas is important to understand. These generally do both the works as supportive and excretive products of the body. An example from modern medicine would explain it thus as when red blood cells get old, they are destroyed and may be considered as malas. The malas perform a supportive function when the iron content of the destroyed red blood cells is reabsorbed and utilized by the body directly. The biliruben content is passed on as bile by the liver into the duodenum, where it aids the absorption of fats. Thereafter, it is excreted in the faeces as a mala or waste product. Thus in this way it can be described that malas perform a dual role.

Sama Dosha

It is when the three humors are in equilibrium and the soul is clean and in accordance with the mind.

According to Ashtang Ayurveda there are three vital principles, which regulate and control the biological functions of the body. They are known as the dosha which are of three types --- Vata, Pitta and Kapha. They are the subtle forms of the three bhutas -air, fire and water. It is seen that the dead body and other lifeless objects do not have any of the three doshas. This proves that all the three doshas are invariably connected with life. Each of them has it's own significance and qualities, which are contrary to each other so as to maintain the state of equilibrium, known as Sama Dosha.

Doshas play a vital role in the basic foundation of Ayurveda. They are responsible for synchronizing and maintaining all the substances and structures of the body, leading to the physical condition of Sama Dosha . Vata doshas are analogous with kinetic energy as they initiate all forms of activity and motion in the body. It acts as a network of communication from tissue to tissue and from cell to cell. It is responsible for perception, integration and response. Vata doshas control all motions, transportation and electromagnetic activities within the body. In short it is the basis of all communication process of the body. Disruption in vata functions leads to diseases of the nervous system and even angina. These diseases are more pronounced in the old age. Pitta dosha is responsible for all types of transformations in the body. Pitta controls hunger, appetite, thirst as well as digestion of food and is also responsible for the conversion of light rays that fall on the retina into electric impulses. This humor is the source of emotions like anger, fear and boldness. Abnormalities in pitta make a person prone to diseases of the digestive and the metabolic system. The diseases mostly affect the abdomen , that is, the area between the chest and the umbilicus. Kapha dosha is the third significant part of dosha. It is the cohesive energy

in the body, that smoothes out problems, lubricates and provides support when needed. If vata dosha is kinetic energy then kapha dosha is potential energy. Kapha abnormalities lead to respiratory disease, feeble mindedness, weakness and lethargy .

Doshas along with the other two components, dhatu and mala, help in maintaining the body in a stable condition. When the body is stable, the soul is clean and works in harmony with the mind , a condition known as Prasanna Atmendriyamana in Ayurvedic terminology. Thus dosha controls the physiological activities in the living body and is also responsible for pathological conditions. When the proportion or the composition of the doshas is disrupted, the body deteriorates from its condition of Sama Dosha to Visam Sthithi (improper proportion), which leads to disease and if not prevented at the right time, may ultimately cause death.

Thus we can conclude that the condition of Sama Dosha is needed to maintain a healthy life. The concentration of these three doshas determine the body type of a person. To achieve the state of Prasanna Atmendriyamana , the body must regulate the composition of the three doshas.

Vata , Tridosha in Ayurveda

Vata, the first of the three doshas conducts bodily movements and mental activities.

More on Vata , Tridosha in Ayurveda

- Types of Vata Dosha

Ashtang Ayurveda considers the human body to be composed of five elements - ether, air, fire, water and earth, which are collectively termed as the panchamahabhootas. From these elements originate the three bodily humors or the three doshas - Vata, pitta and kapha. These three administer all the physical and mental functions of the body and thus are necessary for good health, vitality and immunity. Each dosha is an amalgamation of any two of the five bhutas with one predominantly ruling. Since these three doshas coordinate all the physiological and psychological processes within the body and mind, they stand responsible for every physical activity, characteristic, mental capacity, physical energy, thoughts and the emotional tendency of human beings. In short, it can be said that although structurally the human body comprises five elements, its functional potentiality is determined by the three humours, with any one finding a superior place in each human body giving the person the subsequent body type. Moreover, a person is more likely to suffer from ailments related to the dosha that is present in the highest concentration.

Vata, the first of the three doshas is made up of the elements earth and air. It controls every body movement and mind activities including blood circulation, sensation, respiration, speech, hearing, touch, natural urges, excretion, formation of foetus, the sexual act, retention and feeling like fear, anxiety, grief and enthusiasm. In short, most of the physical phenomena associated with the nervous system of human beings are under the dominance of vata. Ashtang Ayurveda claims to have found out the site of existence of the three doshas. Accordingly, vata is said to exist below the naval and the lower part of the body.

People who have vata type of constitution are usually physically active and thin. Their skin and hair are dry and joints are prominent. Under stressful conditions, they tend to lose their decision-making power and become insecure, fearful and anxious. They are light sleepers and prefer warm climate. The vata people are characterised by immense creativity and enthusiasm. Their digestive system, particularly the colon is vulnerable and often give rise to problems. The renowned Ayurvedic text, the Charaka Samhita, precisely lays down the characteristics of vata dosha :dry and rough (rookshaha), light or lacking weight (laghuhu), cool (sheetoha), always moving (chalota); broad, unlimited, unbounded (vishadaha) and rough (kharaha).

There are five types of vata dosha. These are pran vata, apan vata, saman vata, vyan vata and udan vata. In pran vata, the air exists in the oral cavity, head, throat, ear, tongue, chest and heart. It helps in intake of food and water, swallowing, sneezing, spitting, respiration and other related activities. It also helps in the proper functioning of the vital elements like Pitta, Kapha, Satva, Raj, Tam and Maan. The disorders in pran vata may cause pulmonary problems, respiratory disorders, asthma, bronchitis, hoarseness, hiccough, tuberculosis and other lungs disorders. Apan vata exists in sigmoid colon, rectum, testicles, scrotum, urinary bladder, vagina, uterus, navel, loins and groins. This type of vata is concerned with the excretion of the stool, urine, semen, menstrual discharges and with child birth. Abnormalities in this vata may result in frequent urination, urinary stones, polyuria, burning urination, urinary bladder problems, haemorrhoids, prolapsus of rectum, constriction of anus fistula and semen related problems. Saman vata resides in stomach and duodenum thus helping in the digestion of food and the proper formation of rasa dhatu, stool and urine. It regulates the assimilation of the food and food contents and finally helps to supply the assimilated matter to blood stream and heart. This vata also controls sweating. The abnormality of this type of vata causes loss of appetite, indigestion, loose stool, etc. Vyan vata is scattered throughout the body. It is concerned with the transmission of the seven dhatus to the vital parts of the body. The abnormalities of this type of vata may result in complications like spasmodic effects, neuralgia, aches, inflammation, rigidity, paralysis and the like. Other disturbances include fever, diarrhoea, and hemorrhagic conditions in certain part of the body. Udan vata invests the navel, thoracic cavity, and chest. This vata controls the act of speech, act of talking, act of singing, enthusiasm and mental strength. It keeps the body strong, brightens color and the texture of skin. Disorders in udan vata create diseases of eyes, mouth, nose, ear, larynx, pharynx, and head.

Vata is stimulated by pungent, bitter and acidic food products and weakened by sweet, sour and salty tasting foods. Ashtang Ayurveda recommends sweet, sour or salty food to a person with vata personality. These people should refrain from watching too much television or from rushing around doing many things at the same time because these activities stimulate vata. Deficiency of vata in the body leads to uneasiness, langour and loss of consciousness while vata excess is responsible for thinness of the body, dark complexion, roughness of the voice, desire for heat, hard stool, insomnia, throbbing sensation, , and weakness. Apart from these, the vitiation of vata can cause swelling in the abdomen and rumbling sound in the intestines.

Thus it can be concluded that people in whom vata dosha dominates tend to show the characteristics of vata personality. Disorders in vata hamper the normal life of a person. To combat the disorders due to increase, decrease, or vitiation of vata, Ashtang Ayurveda suggests proper diet and various yogic therapies.

Pitta , Tridosha in Ayurveda

Pitta, one of the three doshas, regulates the digestive and metabolic processes in the human body.

More on Pitta , Tridosha in Ayurveda

- Types of Pitta Dosha

Ashtang Ayurveda talks about the three bodily humors or the three doshas - Vata, pitta and kapha, which determine the body's physical and mental functions. For a healthy, vital and well-protected body, a balanced condition of the three doshas is mandatory. These doshas are in fact derived from the five components, namely earth, water, divine fire, air and universal space, which are collectively termed as the panchamahabhootas. Each dosha combines any two of the five bhootas and out of these two, one dominates. Since these three doshas supervise all the physiological and psychological processes within the body and mind, every physical activity, characteristic, mental capacity, physical energy, thoughts and the emotional tendency of human beings can be explained in terms of doshas. Although the structure of the human body is built up of five elements, the three humors define its functional status. Any one dosha predominates in each human body, determining the respective body type and making the person prone to ailments related to that dosha.

Pitta, one of the three doshas, is made up of the elements fire and water. It is responsible for thirst, digestion, hunger, heat regulation, vision, softness and luster, intellect, cheerfulness and sexual vigor. In

short, this dosha governs all changes taking place in the physiology, from the digestion of food to the regulation of feelings, emotions and sensory perceptions. According to Ashtang Ayurveda, the site of existence of pitta is between the naval line and the `epigastrium` line.

The Charaka Samhita, a well known Ayurvedic text, defines the characteristics of Pitta dosha in the following way: hot and a little sycophantic (sahasnehamushnam), liquid and acidic (dravamlam), sharp, burning (tikshnam), always flowing in an unbounded manner (saram); pungent and sharp (katuhu). People of pitta personality tend to be of medium proportions and frame. They possess warm skin that is very fair or glowing and may be sensitive. Their fine hair may show signs of premature graying or thinning. These people are intelligent and strong-minded in thought, speech and action. They show signs of purpose and ambition in each step as well as intensity in their voice whenever they speak. They are moderate sleepers and like to stay in cooler environments. Balanced pitta is specifically characterized by self-confidence and entrepreneurship.

There are five types of pitta, each having its own specific area of activity. These types are pachack pitta, ranjak pitta, sadhak pitta, alochak pitta and bhrajak pitta. Pachack pitta enables digestion and metabolism and is found in the duodenum and the intestines, those locations where the main process of digestion (breakdown and conversion) takes place. Apart from digestion, this pitta administers the formation of all other types of pitta in the body. Since formation of body structures and synthesis of energy occur as a result of proper digestion and metabolism, pachack pitta is essential for the maintenance of normal bodily activities. Ranjak pitta originates in the liver and determines to a certain extent the color and odor of blood, urine, fecal matter and other substances. Changes in the colour of these substances indicate improper functioning of ranjak pitta and suggests disturbances in the liver. Sadhak pitta is present in the heart area and governs most mental and physical activities. Because this pitta promotes concentration, good will, good work, courage, capability, sharpness, intelligence, positive thoughts and energy, it plays a major role in the achievement of life goals. Alochak pitta is present in the eyes and at the point between the eyebrows, which is often referred to as the spiritual "third" eye. This pitta converts the reflection of an item on the retina into an image and thus enables us to see. Bhrajak pitta invests the skin tissue, giving it color, shine and quality. It helps in the regulation of body temperature by getting rid of excess heat through sweating. It facilitates the transport of ointments, oils and other such substances that are applied externally and enables them to enter the deeper layers of the skin so that they can effectively reach the place of action.

Food with bitter, sweet and astringent tastes find favor with the pitta constitution. An excessive intake of hot, spicy or sour foods, fermented, fried, oily, stale and "fast" foods; artificial colorings and flavorings, sour or unripe fruits and alcoholic drinks, hamper the normal pitta constitution of the body. Prolonged exposure to the sun, experiencing hot weather, indoor heat, chemicals, corrosives and undergoing strenuous exercises augment the constitution of pitta. In addition, an excess of normal

human impulses such as mental tensions, fighting, fasting, cruelty, jealousy, competition and greed can cause a misbalance in the pitta. Misbalanced pitta leads to improper digestion, acidity, burning sensations, irritation, ulcers, elevated body temperature, redness, skin disorders, hemorrhages, piles, eye problems, disturbed sleep, loss of confidence, mal absorption of food, malnourishment, loss of appetite or excessive hunger and thirst, discolorations of the skin and body substances such as urine and blood as well as reduced or excessive secretions of hormones and enzymes. If these complications are not properly treated, the body eventually becomes weak and cold.

Thus we can conclude that those persons in which pitta dominates exhibit the pitta type of personality. Disorders in pitta may prevent a person from leading a healthy life. If this pitta is well balanced, the digestive system functions properly thus ensuring proper metabolism.

Kapha , Tridosha in Ayurveda

Kapha, the third of the three doshas, is vital for maintaining firmness and sexual vigour.

More on Kapha , Tridosha in Ayurveda

- Types of Kapha Dosh

According to Ashtang Ayurveda, the five elements or the panchamahabhootas are the source of the bodily humors of the doshas. There are three doshas, namely, vata, pitta and kapha. These preside over all the physical and mental activities of the body and thus ensuring good health, vivacity and immunity. In each dosha, any two of the five bhutas are present with any one being predominant. By coordinating all the physiological and psychological processes within the body and mind, these doshas initiate and regulate every physical activity, characteristic, mental capacity, physical energy, thoughts and the emotional tendency of human beings. One can opine that although the basis of the human body is constituted by the five elements, the three humors regulate the way in which the body will function. The one humor that is predominant in a person's body regulates the body type of that person. Disturbances in the dominant dosha make the person unhealthy and ill.

Kapha, the third of the three doshas is made up of the elements water and earth and is the foundation of all the solid structures in the body. In the opinion of Ashtang Ayurveda, kapha exists in the upper part of the body, above the `epigastrium` line, mainly investing the thoracic cavity, upper limbs and head. It is concerned with firmness, heaviness, strength, sexual potency, forbearances and restraints. It can be said that kapha dosha integrates the whole body by giving it mass and stability and protecting it from foreign invasions.

People with kapha type of body tend to possess a large body framework with padded joints. They have thick, smooth skin which is a bit oily and their hair is glossy and wavy.. They exhibit stability and tranquility in thought, speech and action, and prove flexible and supportive in relationships. Moreover, they are steady and loyal. Since they are calm and serene, they enjoy long heavy sleeps and dislike humid, congested surroundings. Their primary quality is their calmness and sweetness. The famous ayurvedic text, the Charaka Samhita, meticulously jots down the characteristics of kapha personality in the following manner: heavy (guru), soft (mridu), cold (sheetoha), exhibiting lubrication (snigdha), sweet (madhura); stable and immune (sthira), and greasy (tikshila).

There are five types of kapha doshas--- kledaka kapha, bodhaka kapha, avalambaka kapha, tarpaka kapha and shleshaka kapha. Kledaka kapha rules the gastric region. Its main function is to lubricate ingested food thus facilitating digestion. Bodhaka kapha is positioned in the tongue and throat and determines the taste. It lubricates food and makes it easier to swallow. Avalambaka kapha functions in the heart, chest and lower back. Its activity includes lubricating the heart and lung tissue thus slowing down wearing and tearing. Tarpaka kapha resides in the heart, sinuses and spinal fluid. Its function is to lubricate the nerve and brain tissue. Shleshaka kapha is present in the joints and provides lubrication to keep the joints smooth and flexible.

The three-ayurvedic tastes that are suitable for the Kapha personality are pungent, bitter and astringent, so more of these should be included in the diet in order to balance kapha. Light warming foods help to balance kapha. Kapha deficiency causes a feeling of emptiness in the stomach and other body cavities, a sensation of dryness or internal burning, looseness of joints, weakness, thirst and sleeplessness. Excess of kapha is exhibited through whiteness of complexion, a feeling of coldness, tiredness, fullness of the stomach, heaviness, looseness of the joints and a tendency to sleep excessively. In case of vitiation, kapha can cause digestive disorders, numbness of limbs, vomiting and distaste for food.

Thus when kapha predominates in a person, he exhibits the characteristics of kapha personality. Disorders in this dosha prevent a person from leading a healthy life. A proper diet that fits the kapha personality should be maintained to prevent disorders in this dosha.

Types of Vata Dosha

Types of Vata dosha can be categorized into five. The five centres of operation and the systematic manner through which Vata influences on the entire organism is considered as the five airs of Vata.

The five types of Vata dosha are: prana, udana, samana, apana and vyana. Prana is also known as air of respiration. It also means `life` which is the first air of the universe and of the body. Although located in the body between the diaphragm and throat, it pervades the region of the heart, chest, face and brain. Prana helps in chewing and swallowing of food and provides immediate nourishment to all vital tissues of the body. The system is being rejuvenated through inhalation, exhalation and timely preservation. The main function of prana is extracting life from the digested food and diffusing it into all of the tissues in the body.

Prana facilitates all movement in and out of the body. It moves in the region of the heart thereby causing it to beat. The food is carried by it through the oesophagus into the stomach. It sustains the heart, arteries, veins, senses, and our intelligence.

If prana cannot function properly life is threatened. It results in respiratory ailments such as bronchitis and asthma, heart ailments and the urge to vomit. Udana is the second type of Vata which means rising of air that flows upward from the navel through the lung and into the throat and nose. It is also recognized as the air of ejection, it provides the vocal powers and clarity of sense perceptions. It preserves the natural forces of the body like the strength of will and capacity for effort.

Udana keeps track of the number of breaths we use. It also has the capacity to preserve memory, both experiential and cognitive. Harm to udana can result in memory loss, impaired speech, heaviness in the head, deep-seated fears, and a shortened life span.

Samana, the third air of Vata, is located between the diaphragm and navel. It aids the movement of food through the stomach and small intestines by stimulating the production of gastric juices and digestive enzymes. It also helps in the assimilation of nutrients that have been extracted from our food. It is the moving force that transports these nutrients to the various tissue elements and discharges wastes into the colon. When samana is disturbed, it can cause mucus accumulation in the stomach called `ama`, as well as indigestion, poor assimilation and diarrhoea.

Apana is the fourth air of Vata that is located in the colon and the organs of the pelvic region. It is also known as the air of elimination. Its major function is to relieve the body of feces, urine, flatus, semen and menstrual waste. Its down ward pressure maintains the foetus position and the flow of its eventual birth. Apana is the most dominant of the five airs as it is situated in Vata's primary location. Apana maintains the delayed nutrition of prana in the organism. Any harm to apana causes diseases of the bladder, anus, testicles, uterus, menstrual problems and persistent urinary diseases, including diabetes.

Vyana is the final air of the Vata and is located in the heart. It diffuses the energy that is derived from food and breath throughout the entire organism. It is circulatory in nature. It functions in the body's circulation channels like the blood vessels, to transport nutritive juices and blood throughout the body. It also carries sweat from the glands to the skin and is the force behind bodily expressions like yawning and blinking. When there is a malfunctioning in Vyana skin becomes dry and causes other body extremities. Circulation becomes poor.

Types of Pitta Dosha

Types of Pitta Dosha are five in number. These centres are required for smooth operation of the body.

Types of Pitta dosha are formed from the element of water. The five types of Pitta dosha are: pachaka, ranjaka, sadhaka, alochaka and bhrajaka. Pachaka is considered in Ayurveda as the first fire of the body. It exists in the small intestine, duodenum, gall bladder, liver, and pancreas and supports the remaining four fires. Pachaka's main action is to dissolve and digest the food we eat. Pachaka also regulates body temperature. After digestion pachaka separates the food's nutritive elements from its waste elements. If an imbalance is created here it causes indigestion and nausea.

Ranjaka is the second fire of Pitta that controls the formation and preservation of blood. It is located in the liver, spleen, and stomach. It also provides the blood with its color and oxygen. If ranjaka is damaged then bile compounds may appear in the blood it may cause diseases like anaemia and jaundice.

Sadhaka is the finest of the fires and is a requisite to the activity of Pitta. It rules along with prana in the heart. Along with udana, it governs memory and the retention and wellness of all mental functioning. If sadhaka is impaired psychic disturbances, mental disorientation, extreme emotional states, and craving for extreme foods, drugs, and so on.

Alochaka is the fourth fire of Pitta that exists in the eyes. It gives the eyes their shine as well as diffuses light and its spectrum of colors throughout the body. When the fourth fire is vitiated, vision is impaired and eyes appear yellow.

The fifth fire, bhrajaka, is located in the skin that gives the skin its shine. It protects the body from extreme atmospheric conditions. It facilitates the assimilation of light, wind, water and oil through the skin. If this is disturbed it causes skin diseases like psoriasis, eczema, and leukoderma.

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Types of Kapha Dosha

The Types of Kapha dosha are formed from the elements of earth and water. There are five types of Kapha dosha.

Kapha that is formed from the elements water and earth manifests in five centers and through these it influences the entire organism. The five waters of Kapha are: kledaka, avalambaka, bodhaka, tarpaka and slesaka.

Kledaka is the water of the stomach. Kledaka originates in the stomach. It is the cause of mucus formation in the body. Kledaka's moist foamy liquid helps in digestion, liquefies foods and nourishes the remaining waters of Kapha. When the first water is aggravated, the digestion process becomes weakened. The abdomen becomes heavy that may lead to nausea.

The second water of Kapha is avalambaka that resides in the chest and heart. It provides a fluid tissue covering to the heart thereby protecting the heart & acting as a shock absorber. It also provides the limbs with energy. When avalambaka is disturbed it brings in laziness. Rheumatic fever and pains in the pericardium may occur.

Bhodhaka is the third water of Kapha. It joins the five waters of body's river. It sends water to the tongue and palate and gives the insight of taste. It registers each of the tastes in nature and sends the appropriate impulses to the receiving tissue long before the food is swallowed. Bodhaka liquefies the food. When this is disturbed, crimes against the body's natural instincts are committed. This creates foul undigested remnants of food which stick in the tissues and promote diseases like obesity, bulimia, and anorexia.

Tarpaka is the fourth water of Kapha that flows in the brain and spinal cord. It soothes the sense organs thereby protects the nervous system. When this is in imbalance the sense organs become impaired that results in memory loss and dullness of sensory perceptions.

The fifth water is slesaka that is located in the joints. It lubricates the joints thereby giving them solidity. Slesaka's oily gel protects the joints from heat thereby making them flexible to move. If slesaka is impaired, the joints may become swollen, painful and dysfunctional.

Gunas in Ayurveda

Gunas in Ayurveda constitute three types; Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These principles interweave to create five elements.

The guna of stillness or tamas, reload the universe and its beings. It is the main principle of support within the material universe. The principle of self-organizing activity or rajas gives motion and coordination to the universe and human life. The principle of vocal and cosmic intelligence or sattva, maintains universal and individual inactivity and awareness. These three gunas operate through five elements they have created directly.

Tamas guna works closely with the physical functions of the body on the physical plane. It is summarized as doshas, tissues and wastes. It is believed that Tamas exercises great influence on the body's water aspect and gives the body its ability to consider and to bear long periods of growth.

Rajas guna influences the psychic plane of existence and works closely with the psychological functions of the body. Rajas exercises the most influence on the body's air aspect, Vata Dosha (humour) on the physical level. This gives one the power to transform what is being perceived externally into thoughts, concepts, visions and dreams. The third principle sattva, permeates each and every minute cell of human body. It functions through the existential states of awareness. However it also influences the physical organism to some extent. It is believed that the sattva exercises the most influence on its fire aspect. The sattva also maintains the cosmic memory of the universe.

The three primordial forces: sattva , rajas & tamas interweave to create the five elements or panchmahabhutas which gives birth the entire creation. According to Ayurveda everything is composed of the Panchamahabhutas

Strotas, Channels of Body Circulation in Ayurveda

There are several channels of body circulation through which the dhatus, doshas and malas circulate, known as strotas in Ayurveda.

Strotas or Channels of body circulation consist of both gross channels like the intestinal tract, lymphatic system, arteries, veins and the genitor-urinary tracts and subtle channels like the capillaries. In Ayurveda the diagnosis of all diseases are based on which of the individual doshas are compromised and which channels are obstructed. A disease originating from one vitiated dosha is able to travel through the channels to the site of another dosha. Excess of dosha can create channel blockages thereby obstructing their normal flow.

Men have thirteen groups of channels and women have fifteen groups of channels. Thirteen channels are common to both men and women. The first three are the channels through which the air, food, and water pass through. These are governed by Vata, Pitta, Kapha.

13 Strotas or Channels of body Circulation

The body's air channels have its origin in the heart and the alimentary tract and conduct pranic force and vitality through the respiration and circulation systems. It becomes impaired by the controlling natural bodily urges, by ingesting dry food and by excessive physical exercise. Symptoms expressed by impaired air channels are shallow and restricted breathing, fear, anxiety and nervousness.

Food channels or annavahastrotas originate in the stomach and carry food through the digestive system. Untimely eating or excessive food consumption, unhealthy foods and low digestion cause vitiation of these channels. The symptoms are loss of appetite, indigestion, vomiting, anorexia and greed.

Water channels or udakavahastrotas have its origin in the appetite and pancreas thereby regulating the body fluid. These passages are obstructed if there is excessive exposure to heat, excessive use of alcohol or other addictives and ingesting dry foods. The symptoms of impairment are excessive thirst, dryness of lips, throat, tongue and palate, selfishness and dullness.

The following seven groups of channels serve each of the body's seven dhatus. Plasma channels or rasavahastrotas originate in the heart and several blood vessels and transport chyle and plasma to the rasa dhatu all over the body. Stress, grief and excessive cold and fatty foods obstruct these passages.

The symptoms of vitiations are anorexia, drowsiness, nausea, fainting and anaemia, impotency, stress and grief.

Blood channels or raktavahastrotas originate in the liver and spleen and transport blood to the rakta dhatu all over the body. This group of channels is often referred to as the circulatory system. The impairment of this system is caused by hot and oily foods, excessive exposure to the sun or fire and radioactivity. The symptoms are skin diseases and rashes, excessive bleeding and inflammation of the genital organs and anus. Emotional symptoms include anger, dullness and aggressiveness.

Muscular channels or mamsavahastrotas originate in the ligaments, tendons and skin. Nutrients are supplied to the muscle dhatu. Impairment of these channels is due to regular intake of heavy, greasy foods, excessive sleep, sleeping after meals, and sedentary lifestyle. The symptoms are usually benign tumors that are produced by the muscular system, tonsillitis, a swollen uvula, hemorrhoids, and swelling of the thyroid glands and adenoids. The emotional symptoms are lack of mental clarity and nervous tension.

Fat channels or medavahastrotas or the adipose system, originate in the kidneys and the omentum. It supplies fat tissue ingredients to the Meda dhatus all over the body. Impairment of this system is due to suppression of digestive activities and excess of fatty foods, alcohol and other addictives. The symptoms of difficulty are generally diabetes, urinary disorders and possessiveness.

Bone and Cartilage Channels or asthivahastrotas or the skeletal system, begin in the hipbone and supply nutritive ingredients to the bone and cartilage dhatus all over the body. Impairment of these channels is caused by excessive activity, friction of the bones, and excessive intake of food which is dry. Some symptoms are dry flaky nails and decaying teeth, painful joints, dry and thinning hair and feelings of deprivation and fear.

Bone Marrow Channels or majjavahastrotas or the central nervous system supply the marrow and nerve tissue nutrients to the bone marrow all over the body. Impairment of the bones and joints is caused by consumption of uneasy combination foods or hot and cold substances taken together, trauma and injury, which affect the bone marrow. The symptoms of vitiation are fainting, dizziness, loss of memory.

Ovum and Sperm Channels or shukravahastrotas are subtler than the preceding channel groups. It has its origin in the testes and ovaries. It transports the semen, ovum and ojas essence to the male and

female tissues. Impairment of these passages is normally the result of excessive or suppressed sex, unnatural sex, sex at improper times like during menstruation and pregnancy, drug addictions and abortions. The symptoms are impotency, infertility and defective pregnancy.

The remaining groups of channels are the body's three elimination systems. Urinary Channels or mootravahastrotas originate in the kidneys and bladder that eject urine from the body. Impairment of these channels is caused by the suppression of urination. The symptoms are excessive, scanty, or frequent urination, as well as fears, anxieties and nervousness.

Excretory Channels or purishvahastrotas or the excretory system, originate in the colon and rectum. They evacuate feces from the body. Vitiating of these channels is caused by weak digestive fire, eating before the previous meal is digested, suppression of defecation. The symptoms of affliction are usually diarrhea, constipation. The emotional symptoms are excessive attachment, dullness, and fear.

Sweat Channels or swedavahastrotas is the last of the excretory channels also known as the sebaceous system. It originates in the fat tissue and hair follicles and drives out sweat from the body. Impairment of these channels is caused by excessive activity, heat, spicy foods, acidic foods, excessive alcohol, additives, grief, fear and anger. The symptoms of are excess perspiration or no perspiration, rough and dry skin, burning sensation of the skin, aggressiveness and dullness.

Two additional channels exist within the female body. They are the menstrual channels that expels blood, secretions and tissue debris from the uterus and the breast milk channel, which carries milk to mother's breast. These two channels are both part of the plasma channel. When the channels are blocked, their corresponding doshas become impaired.

Malas in Ayurveda

Mala constitutes the excretory products of the body whose proper functioning is an essential factor for keeping the body.

Mala are the substances or waste matters that need to be eliminated from the body. They are in fact excretory derivatives formed as a result of various physiological activities going on in the body. The name Mala is derived from the word malinikaran which means toxification, a principle property of the excretory products. The malas are also known as Dushya because they have a tendency to cause

diseases and disorders under the influence of the imbalanced doshas. They are the third component of the body's physiological cycle, the other two being doshas and dhatus. According to Ayurveda only a balanced condition of doshas, dhatus and malas can produce Aarogya (good health or disease free condition) and their imbalance causes ill health or disease. Purish (stool), Mutra (urine) and Sweda (sweat) are considered to be the main malas or excretory product of the body.

Purish

Purish or stool is the waste product which is left after digestion after the nutrients of the digested food have been absorbed by the body. When the body absorbs water, minerals and other salts, the remaining matter is converted into solid faeces and eliminated from the body. For the faecal matter to be consistent, both the gastrointestinal mobility and the nature of diet should be taken care of. The tridoshas (vata, pitta and kapha) must be in equilibrium to guarantee normal evacuation of faeces. Pitta and kapha help in the process of digestion while vata is responsible for proper mobility throughout the process. Any discrepancy or imbalance relating to any of these can lead to various ailments like abdominal heaviness or pain, flatulence, constipation or diarrhoea. Disturbances in this mala may also give rise to diseases like osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, low-back pain, bronchitis as well as irritable bowels and stomach ulcers.

Mutra

Mutra is a form of mala that is derived from the various physiological processes that go on within the human body. The entire urinary system comprising the kidneys, the uterus, the urinary bladder and the urethra takes part in the formation and removal of urine, thus regulating the fluid balance in our body and also preserving the blood pressure at an optimum level. Any imbalances like increased or decreased urine, may lead to diseases such as urinary infections, kidney stones, abdominal pain, cystitis and various bladder disorders.

Sweda

Sweda is the third major mala, and it occurs as a waste product during the synthesis of meda dhatu (fatty tissue). The elimination of sweda occurs through skin pores. It helps in the regulation of body temperature and maintains the electrolytic balance within the body. The channels that are responsible for transporting the sweat to the upper layers of the skin are known as sweda vaha srotas. If normal formation and flow of sweat is not maintained it might lead to various disorders like skin infections, loss of fluid balance, itching or burning sensation over the body, and reduced body temperature.

Thus in Ayurveda, malas are of ample significance in maintaining the body's health. If one is not eliminating malas, it means that somewhere in the body the deposition of "ama" is taking place. Ashtang Ayurveda suggests various treatments to get rid of these toxins from the body. If these waste products are not formed and eliminated, the metabolic process gets disturbed resulting in the formation of malformed tissues. Therefore, according to Ayurveda, the body needs to separate the utilisable part of the ingested food from the waste products and excrete those waste matters at the appropriate time for maintaining health.

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