BIOLOGICAL HUMORS AND SUITABLE AYURVEDIC REGIMEN FOR BETTER LIFE

Rapolu Sunil Buchiramulu¹*, Sunil Kumar², Ravi Shukla³, Ashutosh Tiwari⁴

¹Junior Resident, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Varanasi
²Junior Resident, Dept. of Swasthavritta and Yoga, Faculty of Ayurveda, institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Varanasi
³Junior Resident, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Varanasi
⁴Junior Resident, Dept. of Rachana Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Varanasi

ABSTRACT

The thing which never dies is called as an immortal and the science of life i.e Ayurveda, the ancient immortal science of life, is the natural healing gift to us from the ancient enlightened Vedic culture. According to Vedic texts, the Vedic system, including Ayurveda, was in practice before 400 BC. Ayurveda recognizes three primary life forces in the body, or three biological humors called Vata, Pitta and Kapha, which corresponds to the elements of air, fire and water. As the active or mobile elements, they determine the life process of growth and decay. The Ayurvedic term for humor is Dosha, meaning that which darkness, spoil or causes things to decay. When they in balanced state in the body, it sustains the body. When out of balance, the Doshas are the causative forces behind the disease process. It is necessary to balance these biological humors in their abnormal state for the better life which will be achieved by following the suitable Ayurvedic Regimen for that particular imbalanced Dosha.

KEYWORDS: Ayurvedic Regimen, biological humors, Dosha.

INTRODUCTION

Theory of ‘Tridosha’ (Biological humors) forms the basis of Ayurvedic physiology, pathology and pharmacology. Though, the term ‘Dosha’ means ‘the disturbing factor’, it has got definite physiological importance in normal state. Basically three ‘Doshas’- ‘Vata’, ‘Pitta’ and ‘Kapha’- are responsible for maintenance of homeostasis in the body; and health is nothing but a state of equilibrium of these ‘Tridoshas’. Disease is manifested as a result of disturbance in the state of equilibrium among these ‘Doshas’. Among the three, Vata is responsible for all kinds of perception and movements. It is also the initiating and controlling factor. ‘Pitta’ performs the activities like digestion, metabolism, production of heat and that is why it is called ‘Agni’ meaning ‘Fire’. ‘Kapha’ performs the functions like protection, strength, stability and resistance. As Ayurveda is based on functional understanding of body, the different entities representing ‘Tridoshas’ at each level of organization can be assumed by analyzing these functions. In generalized terms, the nervous, endocrine and immune mechanisms can be equated to ‘Vata’, ‘Pitta’ and ‘Kapha’ respectively.[¹]

These three biological humors are the physiological entities; they are expressed by their attributes and function.
Different attributes of Dosha:

Each Dosha has its Primary qualities according to which we recognize them. Caraka has explained the particular attributes of a particular Dosha and the traits/characters these specific attributes (Guna) produce in an individual. Thus, Vata has eight (8), Pitta has five (5) and Kapha has twelve (12) Gunas in total. Further, each Guna is responsible for producing one or more traits/characters. An excess or deficiency of these qualities indicates an excess or deficiency of the particular Dosha. This in term brings about various pathological changes.

The following table describes the different attributes that have been ascribed to each Dosha.\(^2\)[3]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vata</th>
<th>Pitta</th>
<th>Kapha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonunctuous/dry (Ruksha)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Unctuous (Snigdha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light (Laghu)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Heavy (Guru)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold (Shita)</td>
<td>Hot (Ushna)</td>
<td>Cold (Shita)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Pungent and sour (Amla and Katu)</td>
<td>Sweet (Madhura)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Liquid (Drava)</td>
<td>Solid (Sandra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Sharp (Tikshna)</td>
<td>Dull (Manda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse/rough (Parusha)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Smooth (Shlakshna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonslimy (Vishada)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Slimy (Vijjala)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile (Chala)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Rigid (Stimita)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abundant (Bahu)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swift (Shighra)</td>
<td>Fleshy smell (Visra)</td>
<td>Essence (Saara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clear (Accha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Soft (Mridu)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Functions of the Dosha (Biological humors):

**Vata:**

Vata, in its normal state, protects the body bestowing enthusiasm, expiration and inspiration, all activities (of the body, mind and speech), initiation (and also execution) of the urges (of faeces, urine etc.), maintenance of the Dhatus (tissues) in their normalcy and proper functioning of the sense organs.\(^4\)

**Pitta:**

Pitta, in its normal state attends to digestion, maintenance of body temperature, vision, production of hunger, thirst, appetite, complexion, intelligence, courage, valour, and softness of the body.\(^4\)

**Kapha:**

Kapha confers stability, lubrication, compactness of the joints, forbearance and such others.\(^4\)
Sign-Symptoms of abnormal Dosha:

1) Aggravated Doshas Sign-Symptoms:
   a) Vata: Vata, when increased (more than its normal) produces emaciation, black dis-
      colouration, desire for hot things, tremors, distension of the abdomen, constipation, loss of
      strength, sleep and of sensory functions, irrelevant speech, giddiness and timid.\(^4\)
   b) Pitta: Produces (when increased) yellow colouration of the faeces, urine, eyes, and skin; ex-
      cess of hunger and thirst, feeling of burning sensation and very little sleep.\(^4\)
   c) Kapha: When increase produces debility of digestive activity, excess salivation, lassitude,
      feeling of heaviness, white colouration of faeces etc., coldness of the body parts, dyspnoea,
      cough and excess of sleep.\(^4\)

2) Sign-Symptoms of Decreased Dosha:
   a) Vata: The Symptoms of Vata when decreased are- debility of the body, the person speaks very
      little activity, loss of sensation and of consciousness and occurrence of all the symptoms of in-
      creased kapha.\(^4\).
   b) Pitta: Decrease of Pitta produces weakness of digestive activity, coldness and loss of lustre.\(^4\)
   c) Kapha: Decrease of Kapha causes dizziness, emptiness of the organs of Kapha, tremors of
      heart (Palpitation) and looseness of the joints.\(^4\)

Ayurvedic Regimen for normalize the Excess Vata Dosha:

The treatment of increased Vata are oleation, sudation, mild purifactory therapies (emesis and purga-
tion), ingestion of foods which are of sweet, sour and salt taste; warm oil-bath, massage of the body,
wrapping the body with cloth, threatening, bath, wine prepared from cornflour and jiggery, enema ther-
apy with oils, and drugs of hot potency, adherence to regimen of enema therapy, comfortable activities,
medicated oils of different kinds prepared with drugs causing increase of hunger and improving diges-
tion; especially, Anuvasan basti (oleation enema) prepared from juice of fatty meat and oil.\(^4\)

In decreased condition of the Vata Dosha, administer the following Vatavardhak Dravya’s to nor-
malise the Decreased Vata Dosha.

- **Fruits:** Dry fruit generally, apples, melons.
- **Vegetables:** Asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower etc.
- **Grains:** Barley, corn, rye etc.
- **Beans:** Aduki, chick peas, fava beans, soy beans, urad dal etc.
- **Oils:** Canola, corn, soy etc.\(^5\)

Ayurvedic Regimen for normalize the Excess Pitta Dosha:

Diet:
• Eat Vata and Kapha increasing food, which are of sweet, bitter and astringent taste.
• Eat a high proportion of raw foods, i.e. salads, fruits and vegetables; avoid pickles, fizzy and acidic drinks and reduce your intake of fruit juice.
• Avoid excess alcohol, salt, tea and coffee

Herbs:
• Digestion –digestive bitters like aloe, gentian, and barberry for medicinal purposes. Cooling or mild spices like turmeric, fennel, coriander, cumin, and mint are best for flavouring food.
• Elimination –bitter laxatives like aloe, cascara sagrada, rhubarb root and senna in acute conditions. Mild laxatives such as milk, ghee or rose, or bulk laxatives like psyllium husk powder are good in milder conditions.
• Energy –calming and cooling tonics: shatavari, bala, amalaki, saffron, aloe gel, licorice, and guduchi.
• Mind –cooling and calming herbs: gotu kola, bhringraj, sandalwood, rose, and lotus seeds. Other useful herbs include skullcap, passion flower, betony.

Oils and massage:
• Use cooling oils such as coconut, sunflower or ghee for massage. For medicated oils, brahmi or bhringraj, are best. They can be applied to the top of the head, forehead and heart.

Other management:
• Indulgence in perfumes which are pleasing, coolant and cordial, wearing garlands of similar nature in the neck and gems on the chest.
• Anointing paste of Karpura, Candana and Usira over the body minute after minute, residing on terraces lit by moon light in the evening.
• Try to maintain a cool environment-bath in cool water. All beneficial activities for Pitta types.
• Do not expose the body to too much sun.

In decreased condition of the Pitta Dosha, administer the following Pittavardhak(Agney ) Dravya’s to normalise the Decreased Pitta Dosha.
• Fruit: Apricots, lemons, papaya etc.
• Vegetables: Avocado, chillies, onions, tomatoes etc.
• Beans: Lentils, peanuts etc.
• Oils: Sesame etc.
• Spices: Black pepper, cinnamon, rock salt, sea salt, mustard etc.

Ayurvedic Regimen for normalize the Excess Kapha Dosha:
Those of *Kapha* are strong emesis and purgations in accordance with prescribed procedures, ingestion of foods, which are dry (non fatty), little in quantity, penetrating and hot, possessing punngent, bitter and astringent tastes; wines which are very old, sexy desires, keeping awake without sleep, exercise of different kinds, worry, dry massage of the body; especially so the emesis therapy, drinking of soups (of grains) use of honey, drugs which reduce fat, inhalation of medicinal smoke, fasting, mouth gargles and experiencing difficulties are all beneficial.[4]

**In decreased condition of the *Kapha Dosha*, administer the following *Kaphavardhak Dravya’s to normalise the Decreased Kapha Dosha***.

- **Fruit**: Bananas, grapes, mango, melons, oranges, lime, lemon etc.
- **Vegetables**: Cucumber, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, yams etc.
- **Grains**: Basmati rice, brown rice, oats, wheat.
- **Beans**: Chick peas.
- **Oils**: Almond, olive, butter, ghee, avocado etc.
- **Spices**: Rock salt, sea salt, tamarind.[5]

**Discussion**:

The *Dosha* in its normal quantity, quality and its normal position replicate the normal healthy life. If any deformity occurs in its quantity, quality or its normal position will produce the unhygienic condition in the human being. Diseases reflect the predominant or below normal level of *Dosha* that produces them. Some diseases are characteristically of one *Dosha* or another. The majority of diseases are of a *Vata* nature, as *Vata* tends towards decay. *Ayurvedic* books list more Vata disorders than *Pitta* and *kapha* together with eighty Vata disorders, forty *Pitta* disorders, and twenty kapha.

For getting The *Ayurvedic* Science’s more significant results, it is essential to everyone should follow the *Ayurvedic* Regimen. *Ayurveda* provides the right regimen for our particular type of the *Dosha*, in term of covering the all aspect of our nature, physical, psychological and spiritual, therefore, affords us a methodology for preventing, as well as curing, disease. In this way *Ayurveda* fulfil its aim of to protect health of the healthy and to alleviate disorders in the diseased.[7]

**CONCLUSION**

*Vata, Pitta and Kapha* are the three biological humors, present in the body are responsible the maintenance of homeostasis in our body. If they are in balanced state, sustains our body and if they are in abnormal state, produces the many abnormalities in our body and imbalances our homeostasis. So it is necessary to follows the *Ayurvedic* Regimen to normalise the abnormal state *Dosha* to maintain them balanced state in our body for better life.

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REFERENCES


For Correspondence:
Rapolu Sunil B.
Email: rapolusunil@gmail.com