

**CONCEPT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SHATKRIYAKALA IN
AYURVEDA**²Hiremath Savita,²Cherian Christy Jose¹ Asso. Prof., Dept. of Kriyashareera JSSAMCH, Mysuru, India² Asst. Prof., Dept. of Kriyashareera JSSAMCH, Mysuru, India**ABSTRACT**

The term *Shatkriyakala* refers to the recognition of the stage of a disease which helps us to determine the appropriate measures to correct the imbalance in *Doshas*. *Shatkriyakala* is one of the various important concepts described in *Ayurveda*. *Acharya Sushruta* has described different phases of a disease in his own unique way. It shows the stepwise progress of *Dosha* and disease.

The term '*Shatkriyakala*' is constituted of three words, '*Shat*' means number 6, '*Kriya*' means action or treatment and '*Kala*' means time. It means the consecutive stages of manifestation of disease and the preventive measures which should be taken to find out complications and overcome them. The *Prayojana* of *Ayurveda* is of two types, maintenance of the existing good health of a healthy person, and curing the disease of a diseased person. So a good understanding of *Kriyakalas* is very essential for early diagnosis, prognosis and for adopting preventive as well as curative measures. It also gives us an idea regarding the present condition of *Doshadushti* and the progress of the diseases in a body.

Keywords *Shatkriyakala* , *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyakti*, *Bheda*.

INTRODUCTION:

In *Ayurveda*, executing therapeutic measures to treat a disease has been given the second place whereas prevention of the disease and maintaining health has been given the foremost priority. As we know that the *Doshas* undergo abnormalities due to indulgence in unsuitable *Ahara - Vihara* (food - activities), they in turn bring about abnormalities in the *Dhatus* and produce diseases. *Doshas* are the factors which are not only capable of vitiation but also have the nature of vitiating the *Dhatus* leading to *Dosha dushya sammurchana* i.e, formation of disease. The sequential order of abnormal changes takes place in the *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni*, *Srotas* etc¹. Thus *Shatkriyakala* mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* gives an idea regarding the present condition of *Doshadusti* and also the progress of any disease.

The word *Shatkriyakala* is comprised of three words – '*Shat*' means number six, '*Kriya*' means treatment or action and '*Kala*' means time or period. It is the time of treatment or opportunities in the process of disease manifestation. The *Shatkriyakala* (six stages) are as follows²

1. *Sanchaya* (Stage of accumulation) - Gradual accumulation of *Doshas* in their respective seats.
2. *Prakopa* (Stage of provocation/aggravation) – accumulated *Doshas* become excited and swollen in this stage.
3. *Prasara* (Stage of immigration / spreading) - Aggravated *Doshas* leave their original place and spread to the other parts of the body through different *Srotas*.
- 4) *Sthanasamshraya* (Stage of localization) - Vitiated *Doshas* move to different places and get localized because

of *Khavaigunya* i.e obstruction in their path.

5) *Vyakti* (Stage of manifestation) - Appearance of symptoms of any specific disease is called as *Vyakti*

6) *Bheda* (Stage of complication) - This stage is described with all chronic features of the manifested disease with complications.³

The golden proverb 'A stitch in time saves nine' is the best example for the *Kriyakala* concept. Treatment becomes easier if the diseases are diagnosed in the earlier stages. The term *kriyakala* is also known as '*Chikitsaavasara*' (the time which denotes the necessity of treatment). *Kriyakala* not

only plays an important role diagnosis and prognosis of a disease, but also in the prevention of the disease.

1. *Sanchayavastha*:

In this stage, the *Dosha* is to accumulate and stagnate in its own place instead of freely circulating as in its normal state. This stage represents the primary phase of a disease. In this stage the person develops an aversion towards similars and attraction towards contraries.⁴ This mild increase is confined to the *Vishistasthana* of the respective *Doshas*. Once it increases certain specific symptoms are also produced by the *Doshas*.

TABLE1: THE SANCHAYA LAKSHANA

NO.	DOSHA	SANCHAYA LAKSHANA
1.	<i>Vata</i>	• <i>Stabdha koshtatha</i> (Dullness in the abdomen) • <i>Poorna koshtatha</i> (Fullness of abdomen)
2.	<i>Pitta</i>	• <i>Peetavabhasata</i> (Yellowishness of skin/body) • <i>Mandoshmata</i> (Mild increase of body temperature)
3.	<i>Kapha</i>	• <i>Angagourava</i> (Heaviness in different parts of the body) • <i>Alasya</i> (Lassitude)⁵

2. *Prakopaavastha*:

The increased accumulated *Doshas* now tend to expand and this is called as *Prakopa*. The *Dosha* which had previously

accumulated and stagnated in its own particular sites tends to become excited and swollen in this stage.⁶

TABLE2: THE PRAKOPA LAKSHANA

NO.	DOSHA	PRAKOPA LAKSHANA
1.	<i>Vata</i>	• <i>Koshtatoda</i> (Pricking sensation in abdomen) • <i>Sancharana</i> (Sound of flatulence in abdomen)
2.	<i>Pitta</i>	• <i>Amlika</i> (Sour eructation) • <i>Pipasa</i> (Thirst) • <i>Paridaha</i> (Buring sensation)
3.	<i>Kapha</i>	• <i>Annadwesa</i> (Aversion to food) • <i>Hrudayotkleda</i> (Heaviness in the chest)⁷

3. *Prasaravastha* : In this stage the *Doshas* which become aggravated due to different causes expand and overflow the limits of their respective locations. This overflow occurs like an overflow of a mixture of starch with water and yeast kept

overnight.⁸ The aggravated *Doshas* spread all over the body in the following ways⁹.

The 15 types of *Prasara* are

1. *Vata Prasara*

2. *Pitta Prasara*

3. *Kapha Prasara*

4. Rakta Prasara

5. Vata pitta Prasara

6. Vata rakta Prasara

7. Vata kapha Prasara

8. Pitta kapha Prasara

9. Pitta rakta Prasara

10. Kapha rakta Prasara

11. Vata pitta rakta Prasara

12. Pitta kapha rakta Prasara

13. Vata pitta kapha Prasara

14. Vata kapha rakta Prasara

15. Vata pitta kapha rakta Prasara

Prasara stage of aggravated Dosha to different places develops specific signs and symptoms as follows.

TABLE3: THE PRASARA LAKSHANA

NO.	DOSHA	PRASARA LAKSHANA
1.	Vata	• Vimarga gamana (The pathways other than its own) • Atopa (distention of abdomen with gargling sound)
2.	Pitta	• Osha (Generalized burning sensation) • Chosha (Sucking pain) • Paridaha (Burning sensation) • Dhumayana (feeling of hot fumes coming out of the body)
3.	Kapha	• Arochaka (Anorexia) • Avipaka (indigestion) • Angasada (Lassitude) • Chardi (Vomiting)¹⁰

4. Sthanasamshraya:

The literary meaning of *Sthanasamshraya* is localization or getting settled to one place. This stage marks the beginning of specific diseases pertaining to those structures. It can be represented with the

stage of *Poorvarooopa* (prodromal phase). Here *Dosha dushya sammurchana* occurs.¹¹ Diseases manifest due to abnormality of channels developed obstruction. That is called '*Khavaigunyata*' in *Srotas*.

TABLE4: THE LAKSHANA ACCORDING TOSTHANA SANCHAYA:

NO.	STHANA (Localization of Doshas)	LAKSHANA (Disorder)
1.	Udara (Abdomen)	• Gulma (Abdominal tumors) • Vidradhi (Abscess) • Udararoga (Abdominal enlargement) • Agnimandhya (Loss of appetite) • Anaha (Constipation) • Visuchika (Gastroenteritis) • Atisara (Diarrhoea), etc.
2.	Basti (Urinary bladder)	• Premeha (Polyurea) • Ashmari (Renal calculus) • Mutraghata (Retention of urine) • Other Urinary disorders
3.	Medhra (Penis)	• Nirrudhaprakasha (Phimosis) • Upadamsha (Ulcer on penis) • Shukadosha (Venereal diseases), etc.
4.	Guda (Rectum and Anus)	• Bhagandara (Fistula in ano) • Arsha (Haemorrhoids), etc

5.	Vrishana (Scrotum/Testis)	• Vridhhi (Scrotal swelling)
6.	Urdhvajatru (Head and Neck)	• Urdhvajatru vikara (Diseases of ear, nose, throat and eye)
7.	Twak (Skin) Mamsa (Muscle) Shonita (Blood)	• Kusta (Skin diseases) • Kshudraroga (Minor maladies) • Visarpa (Erysipelas)
8.	Medas (Adipose tissue)	• Granthi (Lymphadenitis) • Apachi (Scrofula) • Arbuda (Tumors) • Galaganda (Goiter) • Alagi (Carbuncle), etc.
9.	Asthi (Bone)	• Asthivradhi (Ostitis) • Anushayi (Periostitis)
10.	Pada (Lower extremities)	• Shlipada (Elephantiasis) • Shonitavata (Gout) • Vatakantaka (Sprain of the ankle joint), etc.
11.	Sarvangashareera (Entire body)	• Jwara (Fever) • Sarvangaroga (diseases involving different parts of the body)¹²

5. Vyaktavastha:

This stage is stated to be the manifestation of the fully developed disease, the result of or due to *Dosha dushya sammurchana*. The diseases will appear in a definite form with most of its signs and symptoms.¹³

They are

- Shopa (Inflammation)
- Arbudha (Tumors)
- Granti (Lymphadenitis)
- Vidradhi (Abscess)
- Visarpa (Erysipelas)
- Jwara (Fever)

- Atisara (Diarrhoea), etc.

6. Bhedavastha:

This is the stage in which the disease may become sub-acute and chronic in nature. For example, if a *Shotha* or *Vidradhi* bursts, it enters the characteristic symptomatology of *Vrana*. Likewise the *Jwara* and *Atisara* may become chronic. If in this stage treatment is neglected, the disease becomes incurable.¹⁴

The relation between *Kriyakala* and *Nidhana panchaka* is shown in the table.

TABLE5: RELATION BETWEEN KRIYAKALA AND NIDHANA PANCHAKA:

NO.	KRIYAKALA	NIDHANA PANCHAKA
1.	Sanchaya	Nidana
2.	Prakopa	Nidana
3.	Prasara	Nidana
4.	Sthanasamshaya	Poorvaroop
5.	Vyakti	Roop
6.	Bheda	Chirakaritva + Upadrava + Asadhyatva

CORRELATION BETWEEN AYURVEDA CONCEPT OF KRIYAKALA AND MODERN SCIENCE:

The 1st stage of *Kriyakala*, *Sanchaya* may represent the level of oxidative stress which damages the cell structure and its functions.

However, *Prakopa* stage has unusual cell proliferation due to oxidative stress which may have increased DNA mutations or induced DNA damage and genome instability.

The stage of *Prasara* can be correlated with the cell migration as oxidative stress can augment tumor growth and metastasis by causing profound alterations in the morphology and adhesive properties of the cells.

On the other hand *Sthanasamshraya* may be called as homing process of the cells. This homing process takes place through multiple steps, which includes progression, invasion and settling of cells into a distant organ.

In the stage of *Vyakti*, all the symptoms of disease appear. However, the last stage of *Kriyakala*, *Bheda* is the final stage of the disease where complications are seen.¹⁵

DISCUSSION:

The disease strikes due to *Dosha dushya sammurchana*. In the *Sanchaya* and *Prakopa* stages, this *Dosha dushya sammurchana* takes place. In *Prasara* and *Sthanasamshraya* stages of *Kriyakala*, the accumulated *Dosha* circulates in the body and gets settled. In *Sthanasamshraya* *Poorvaroopa Lakshana* arises. In *Vyaktavastha* of *kriyakala* all the signs and symptoms are fully developed and can be compared with the clinical stages of the diseases. The last stage of *Kriyakala* is *Bedha*, which is characterised by either further complications if left untreated or recovery.

The knowledge of *Shatkriyakala* helps in the understanding of the process of manifestation of the disease. The physician, who diagnoses a disease and treats it according to *Kriyakala*, becomes a successful practitioner. *Shatkriyakala* helps the physician to plan the treatment. It also

helps in procuring knowledge about the *Sadhya-Asadhyata* of the disease.

CONCLUSION:

Shatkriyakala is an unique concept of *Ayurveda*. It helps the physician to adopt the line of treatment by observing the vitiated *Dosha* condition. The duration of a particular stage depends upon the virility of *cause* and severity of *Doshas* which in turn depends upon the triggering factors and the nature of the disorder. If the physician is able to detect the changes in the early stages based on the manifestations of *Dosha* and advice the right medication at that stage, the progress of the disease can be checked.

The treatment becomes easier when the disease progress is diagnosed and proper measures are taken in the initial stages. Controlling the *Dosha* in the *Sanchaya* stage prevents it from entering into the consequent stages like *Prakopa*. If the vitiating and progressing *Doshas* are neglected, they tend to spread to different *Dhatus* and become deep rooted. Now treatment becomes difficult and *Vyadhi* attains *Chirakaritva* and *Asadhyatva*. Therefore, the sign of an excellent and dedicated physician is his swiftness in diagnosing the ailment his patient is suffering from so as to treat him in the best possible way and gift the patient with bountiful health.

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