

Chapter 10: Role of Prakriti on different therapeutic procedure of Panchakarma

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Abstract:

Prakriti refers to the inherent constitution of an individual, representing their natural physical, physiological, and psychological makeup. According to Ayurveda, each person possesses a unique and stable Prakriti that is established at the moment of conception, influenced by the specific balance of the three Doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—during the union of sperm and ovum. The dominance of one or more of these Doshas shapes an individual's Prakriti, which in turn affects their responses to external stimuli, medications, and disease susceptibility. This concept is regarded as one of the foundational principles of personalized and preventive healthcare in traditional medicine. In the diagnostic approach outlined by Charaka, the assessment of Prakriti is prioritized before evaluating Vikriti (pathological condition), as it aids in understanding disease patterns, drug response (pharmacogenomics), therapeutic planning, and prognosis. Hence, Prakriti underscores the uniqueness of each individual, forming a cornerstone of Ayurvedic diagnosis, preventive strategies, and treatment protocols.

Keywords: *Dashavidha Pariksha*, Prakriti, Panchkarma, Prognosis,

1. Introduction:

Prakriti refers to an individual's inherent constitution, representing their natural state formed by genetic makeup. In Ayurvedic philosophy, it is believed that each person has a distinct and unchanging Prakriti, established at the point of conception through the interaction of Shukra (sperm) and Shonita (ovum) within the womb (Susrut Samhita Sharirasthan 4/62). The dominance of one or more of the three fundamental biological energies—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—determines this constitution. As such, Prakriti reflects the body's inherent anatomical, physiological, and psychological blueprint, and influences a person's response to external stimuli, medications, and disease risk. The foundational idea of Prakriti aligns closely with the modern concepts of personalized and preventive medicine, especially in relation to genomic understanding. Prakriti, being stable throughout an individual's life, contrasts with Vikriti, which denotes an imbalanced or diseased state. Identifying one's baseline Prakriti is thus essential for recognizing deviations and guiding appropriate therapeutic or preventive measures. Though ideally assessed at birth, Prakriti continues to influence an individual's health trajectory across their lifespan. Ayurveda gives this concept a central role, especially in surgical and parasurgical practices, where treatment outcomes depend heavily on the patient's psychological strength or Manasika Bala. The human being (Purusha), as described in Ayurvedic texts like the Susrut Samhita (Sharirasthan 1/13), is composed of elements including Doshas, Dhatus, Indriyas, Manas, Buddhi, and Atma. Much like a unique genetic code, each individual is defined by a particular configuration of these elements, forming their personal Prakriti.

This individual constitution is not just genetically inherited but also shaped by environmental influences. While parental genetic material provides the biological basis, factors such as age, geographical location, climate, seasonal changes, and sociocultural environment contribute to the acquired traits. Thus, Prakriti encompasses both hereditary and adaptive dimensions, manifesting in one's appearance, behavior, and physiological tendencies (Dey & Pahwa, 2014). Panchakarma is the Sodhana Procedure of Ayurveda which indicated in different disease and also healthy Volunteers. Panchakarma procedure is performed according to Agni Bala, Dosha, & Prakriti of the body. Prakriti plays a vital role on different therapeutic procedure of Panchakarma. Prakriti assessment, a core concept in Ayurveda, helps determine an individual's unique constitution based on the balance of the three doshas Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. (Susrut Samhita Sharirasthan 4/61), guiding personalized healthcare and lifestyle choices. Without proper assessment of individual Prakriti, Panchakarma Procedure is a difficult task. Before Panchakarma procedure dosha predominant assessment of body or essential Prakriti assessment is needed. Dose fixation, drug selection, season and time assessment for different therapeutic procedure is depend

according to the Prakriti and dosha predominant of body. (Rotti, H., Raval, R., Anchan, S., Bellampalli, et.al. 2014)

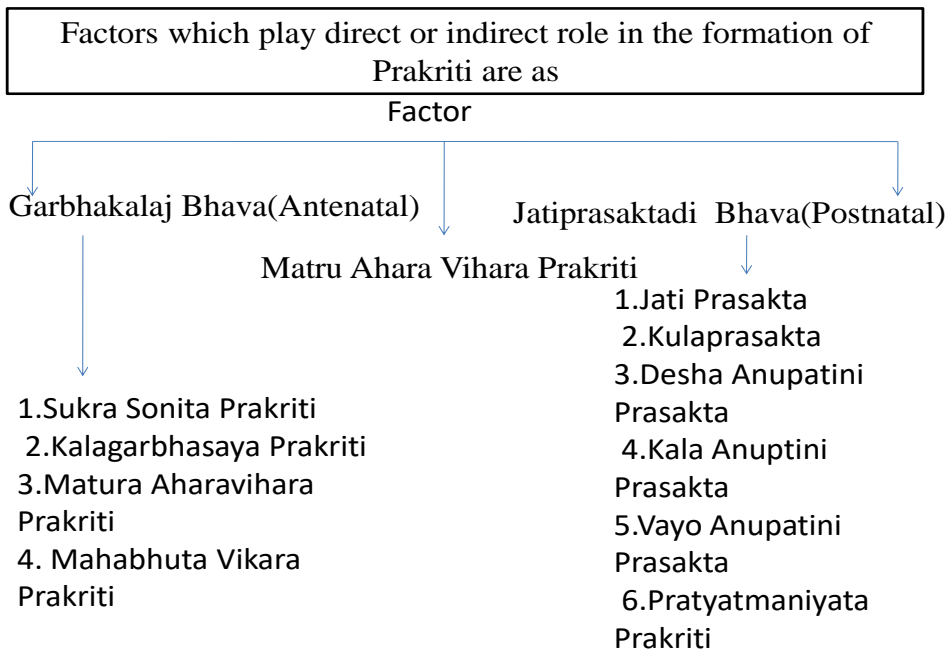
2. Concept of Prakriti

The term Prakriti originates from the Sanskrit roots ‘Pra’ meaning "first" and ‘Kri’ meaning "to create," thereby implying "the first creation." In Ayurvedic philosophy, Prakriti also signifies an individual's inherent nature or natural constitution. Ayurveda postulates that the entire physical universe, including the human body, is composed of the Panchamahabhutas—ether (Akasha), air (Vayu), fire (Teja), water (Jala), and earth (Prithvi). These elemental forces manifest within the body as the Tridoshas: Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Although all three Doshas are present in every person, one typically predominates, defining the individual's Prakriti. Prakriti represents a distinct biological and psychological profile that is determined by a person's anatomical, physiological, and behavioral characteristics. It is considered independent of one's ethnicity, geographic background, or cultural context. This constitution is shaped by both genetic and environmental influences. The genetic component arises from the contributions of the father's Shukra (sperm) and the mother's Shonita (ovum), whereas environmental factors such as age, heredity, climate, seasonal variation, and geographical location influence the acquired traits.

In Ayurveda, Prakriti plays a central role in explaining human uniqueness. It reflects an individual's innate tendencies and physiological predispositions that are established at conception and remain stable throughout life. According to the teachings of Acharya Sushruta, Prakriti is formed at the time of conception based on the prevailing condition of the Tridoshas during the union of Shukra and Shonita in the womb (Garbhashaya). Depending on the dominant Dosha(s), an individual may develop a single-Dosha constitution (Ekadoshaja), a dual-Dosha constitution (Dvandvaja), or a balanced constitution (Samamishra), where all three Doshas are equally expressed. Acharya Charaka also emphasized that Prakriti arises from the integration of the Panchamahabhutas and Chetana (consciousness or soul), resulting in the living entity or Purusha. This natural configuration, which reflects the unique physical and psychological nature of an individual, is referred to as Sharira Prakriti (Govindaraj et al., 2015).

2.1. Factors affecting formation of Prakriti(SusrutSutrastan 24/5)

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



2.2. Significance of Prakriti

Maintaining Health: Ayurveda emphasizes that individuals should adopt a lifestyle and dietary habits that counterbalance their inherent constitution (Prakriti) to sustain good health. Therapies aimed at rejuvenation, such as Rasayana and Vajikarana, show optimal effectiveness when tailored to one's specific Prakriti.

2.2.1. Digestive Fire (Agni) Based on Prakriti

According to Acharya Charaka (Charaka Samhita, Chikitsasthana 15/50), the nature of digestive fire (Agni) varies depending on a person's constitution:

- Vishamagni (Irregular) is commonly observed in those with a Vata-dominant constitution.
- Tikshnagni (Intense) is typical in individuals with a Pitta-dominant nature.
- Mandagni (Weak) is often found in those with Kapha-dominant traits.
- Samagni (Balanced) is characteristic of those whose Doshas are in a state of equilibrium.

2.2.2. Assessment of Physical Strength (Bala)

The level of physical strength in individuals can be correlated with their Prakriti. Generally, people with a Kapha-dominant constitution tend to possess greater strength compared to those with Pitta or Vata dominance. Recognizing an individual's inherent strength is vital for effective diagnosis and therapeutic planning.

2.2.3. Susceptibility to disease/Predictive Medicine

Each individual's Prakriti (constitutional type) is associated with a natural predisposition to certain health conditions. The dominance of a particular Dosha—Vata, Pitta, or Kapha—determines one's vulnerability to specific disorders. For instance, those with a Kapha-dominant constitution are more likely to develop ailments such as poor digestion (Agnimandhya), chronic cold (Pratishyaya), obesity-related issues (Medoroga), and diabetes (Prameha). Similarly, individuals with a Vata constitution often face conditions like abdominal distension (Gulma), bloating (Atopa), and joint disorders (Sandhigataavata). On the other hand, people with a Pitta-dominant Prakriti are more susceptible to ailments such as hyperacidity (Amlapitta), anemia (Pandu), jaundice (Kamala), and bleeding disorders (Raktapitta). Clinical studies and observations further support these tendencies. Vata Prakriti individuals show higher susceptibility to conditions such as anxiety neurosis, thyrotoxicosis, and tuberculosis. Pitta types are more prone to hypertension, peptic ulcers, asthma, and rheumatoid arthritis. Meanwhile, Kapha individuals commonly develop metabolic and cardiovascular conditions like diabetes mellitus, obesity, high blood pressure, and ischemic heart disease. Moreover, treating Dosha-specific illnesses tends to be more challenging when the disease aligns with the patient's dominant Prakriti. For example, Vata disorders are harder to manage in Vata individuals. Recognizing these inherent tendencies allows for early prediction and the possibility of preventing or delaying disease onset through tailored diets, medications, and lifestyle regimens (Purva & Meena, 2011).

2.2.4. Disease Diagnosis

Charaka, a foundational figure in Ayurveda, introduced the Dashavidha Pariksha—a tenfold examination—for assessing the strength and condition of a patient. Among these, the assessment of Prakriti (the individual's constitutional nature) is prioritized as the first and foremost step in clinical evaluation.

2.2.5. Disease Prognosis

The outcome and ease of treatment for a disease can depend heavily on the alignment between the causative Dosha and the individual's inherent Prakriti. If both are of the same type, the disease tends to be more challenging to manage

(Krichrasadhya). Conversely, if the aggravated Dosha differs from the person's Prakriti, the disease is generally more responsive to treatment.

2.2.6. Disease Management and Personalized Treatment

Charaka emphasized the concept of Prati Purusha Siddhanta, which advocates tailoring treatment strategies to each individual's unique constitution and health condition. Understanding a patient's Prakriti allows the practitioner to devise appropriate therapeutic approaches. For example, in managing fevers associated with undigested toxins (Ama Jvara), a patient with Kapha dominance may benefit from complete fasting (Apatarpana Chikitsa), while this method may not be suitable for a Vata-dominant individual (Tawalare et al., 2024).

2.2.7. Preventive Healthcare

Ayurveda recommends daily (Dinacharya) and seasonal (Ritucharya) health routines based on an individual's Prakriti to maintain balance and prevent disease. For instance, individuals with Kapha constitution are advised to engage in regular physical activity and consume light foods, avoiding daytime sleep. On the other hand, those with Vata constitution are encouraged to consume nutrient-dense, heavier meals, limit physical exertion, and may benefit from daytime rest. Ayurvedic texts highlight numerous preventive strategies, including Sadvritta (ethical conduct), Swasthavritta (health regimens), and appropriate diet and lifestyle choices tailored to one's Prakriti, thereby promoting long-term wellness (Chatterjee & Pancholi, 2011).

2.2.8. Integration with Genomic Medicine

The idea of linking Prakriti with genetic profiles has gained traction in recent years. Researchers have investigated correlations between Ayurvedic constitution types and specific genetic markers, such as SNPs in genes like HLA DRB1, CYP2C19, and EGLN1, which are involved in inflammation, oxidative stress, and immune responses. Associations have also been found with CD cell markers and DNA methylation patterns, offering insights into susceptibility to cardiovascular and inflammatory conditions. These findings support the hypothesis that Ayurvedic classification of Prakriti may have a molecular basis and could contribute to advances in personalized and predictive healthcare (Huang et al., 2022).

3. Panchakarma

The word "Panchakarma" originates from two Sanskrit terms: Pancha, meaning five, and Karma, meaning action or procedure. Thus, Panchakarma refers to a set of five therapeutic interventions. It serves not only as a means to manage and treat illnesses but also plays a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing overall health. Classical Ayurvedic texts recommend the practice of Panchakarma during seasonal transitions to cleanse the body, calm the mind, and improve digestive and metabolic functions (Conboy, Edshteyn, & Garivaltis, 2009).

Panchakarma represents a distinctive therapeutic system in Ayurveda, comprising five meticulously structured purification techniques tailored to the individual's constitution (matra) and timing (kala), as referenced in Charaka Samhita (Sutra Sthana 2/15). These procedures aim to eliminate accumulated toxins and restore the body's natural equilibrium, thereby accelerating rejuvenation and enhancing the efficacy of subsequent treatments. Traditionally, this purification process is referred to as Shodhana, a form of Apakarshana, meaning the expulsion of bodily impurities. Panchakarma is recognized for its comprehensive benefits, offering preventive, promotive, and curative health outcomes.

Aacharya Charaka has given first priority to sodhana while mentioning the three modalities of treatment for all diseases viz., Sodhana, Samana and Nidana Parivarjana (Susruta Sutras 5/3). The order of treatment according to their priority is Pachana, Snehana and Svedana, which can be termed as Purvakarma, Pradhana Karma includes Vamana, Virechana, Niruha and Anuvasana Basti, Nasya; Pashchata Karma includes Sansarjana Karma, Rasayanadi Karma and Samana Prayoga.

3.1. Deepan & Pachana:

Agni, often referred to as the body's metabolic fire, plays a central role in maintaining overall health. When functioning normally, it supports bodily processes, but imbalances—whether in the form of underactivity or overactivity—can give rise to various diseases, as mentioned in classical Ayurvedic texts like Sarangadhara Samhita (Purvardha 4/1). To address such imbalances, Ayurveda prescribes two primary approaches: Shamana (palliative therapy) and Shodhana (purification therapy). One of the ten methods categorized under Langhana (therapies involving depletion or reduction) is Deepana, which focuses on enhancing the digestive fire, especially when it is underperforming. Deepana dravyas (appetizing substances) are specifically used to stimulate Jatharagni (digestive fire) without directly aiding in the digestion of Ama (undigested or toxic metabolic waste). According to Sharngadhara, these substances boost digestive activity but are distinct from those that eliminate Ama. In clinical practice, Deepana dravyas hold significant therapeutic value, as their action on

digestive fire contributes to disease management and modulation. The relation of Agni And Prakriti is given below.

1. Vata Prakriti ↔ Visama Agni ↔ Vata Prakriti Purusha needs medium deepanadravya for enhances Agni
2. Pitta Prakriti ↔ Tikshna Agni ↔ Pitta Prakriti Purusha needs mild quantity dose of deepanadravya for enhances Agni.
3. Kapha Prakriti ↔ Kapha Prakriti Purusha needs maximum quantity dose Deepana dravya for enhances Agni.

Pachanachikista refers to the oral administration of certain medicine that augments and assists the process of digestion, thus ensuring the optimal state of gastrointestinal tract. Thereby one can expect proper digestion and assimilation. The relation of Agni And Prakriti is given below

1. Vata Prakriti ↔ Visama Agni ↔ Vata Prakriti Purusha needs medium Pachanadravya for enhances Agni
2. Pitta Prakriti ↔ Tikshna Agni ↔ Pitta Prakriti Purusha needs mild quantity dose of Pachanadravya for enhances Agni.
3. Kapha Prakriti ↔ Kapha Prakriti Purusha needs maximum quantity dose Pachanadravya for enhances Agni.

3.2. Snehana karma (oleation therapy)

Snehana means oleation therapy, the therapy, which produces Snigdha or oilness in the body. Snehana i.e., the Abhyantara and Bahya Snehana both are related with the purva Karma of Sodhana Cikitsa. In which Bahya Snehana is called as Abhyanga which is done along with Sveana after the completion of Abhyantara Snehana. Snehana is also used as Pradhana Karma to pacify the specific diseases or for the nourishment of body. Snehana is the major preparatory procedure to be performed before Sodhana.

Abhyanga:

1. Vata Prakriti (Visamagni) ↔ The body of Vata Prakriti Purusha is more dryness in nature. So Vata Prakriti Purusha needs maximum duration of Abhyanga
2. Pitta Prakriti (Tikshnagni) ↔ The body of Pitta Prakriti Purusha is moderate dryness in nature. So Pitta Prakriti Purusha needs medium duration of Abhyanga.
3. Kapha Prakriti (Mandagni) ↔ The body of Kapha Prakriti Purusha is mild dryness in nature. So Pitta Prakriti Purusha needs minimum duration of Abhyanga.

Sirodhara:

According to Dharakalpa, Sneha is taken according to the condition of dosha-

- Vata Prakrit → Tila Taila
- Pitta Prakrit → Ghrita
- Kapha Prakriti → Tila Taila
- Raktaj → Ghrita

3.3. Vamana

Charaka defined Vamana as a process in which waste products or Toxins (Dosha) are eliminated through upper channels i.e. mouth. The process in which Apakva pitta and Kapha are forcibly expelled through the oral route is called Vamana (Charak Sutrasthana 15/12)

Chakrapani takes Urdhavabhage as Urdhavamukha. Vamana means to induce vomiting; it is a bio-cleansing measure meant for the elimination of doshas (mainly kapha) accumulated in the upper gastro intestinal tract. Acharya Charak has said that Vamana is the best treatment to eliminate the vitiated kapha Dosha from the body. So Vamana mainly indicated in Kaphaja Prakriti Purusha (Gupta, B., Mahapatra, S. C., Makhija, R., Kumar, A., Jirankalgikar, N., Padhi, M. M., & Devalla, R. B. 2011)

3.4. Virechana (Therapeutic Purgation)

Virechana Karma refers to the therapeutic elimination of accumulated waste materials and excess doshas, especially from the lower gastrointestinal tract, through the anal route. It is one of the five principal purification techniques in Ayurveda, collectively known as Panchakarma. This procedure is particularly effective in removing excess Pitta Dosha, though it also helps in clearing Kapha and, to a lesser degree, Vata. Recognized as a vital Shodhana (purification) therapy, Virechana plays a significant role in restoring doshic balance and promoting systemic detoxification. According to classical Ayurvedic texts, including Charaka Sutrasthana (15/12), Virechana not only purges Pitta from the gastrointestinal tract but also expels it from deeper tissues and systems, indicating its action at a cellular level. Its safety, ease of administration, and minimal side effects contribute to its frequent use in clinical practice. For individuals with Pitta-dominant Prakriti, Virechana is especially beneficial, as it facilitates efficient removal of aggravated Pitta along with Vata and Kapha when needed, thereby supporting comprehensive bodily detoxification and homeostasis (Chaturvedi et al., 2016).

3.5. Vasti (Medicated Enema)

The process in which the medicated oil or decoction is administered into the Pakwashaya or Garbhashya or Mutrashya with the help of Basti Yantra is known as Basti. Vastikarma is the procedure by which the medicines in suspension form are

administered through rectum or genitourinary tract using Vastiyantara. According to Ayurveda, Basti is said to be complete chikitsa for all disease (saravanchikitsamapibastimeke). It is the most important procedure among Panchakarma procedures and the most appropriate remedial measure for Vatadosha. However, Vasti is indicated in various disorder but in is Very effective in Vataj Prakriti purusha. Administration of Vasti in Vata Prakriti Purusha, leads to easily evacuates of Vata Dosha along with Pitta and Kapha Dosha from the body. (Nakanekar, A., & Rathod, P. 2023)

3.6. Nasya

In Ayurvedic practice, the term Nasya refers to a therapeutic procedure that involves administering medicinal substances through the nasal route. According to the ancient scholar Sushruta, this method entails the use of herbs, oils, or other formulations introduced via the nostrils. Any treatment or remedy delivered through the nasal passage falls under the category of Nasya therapy. Nasya is given in in different Doshika imbalance but it is mainly indicated in Kaphaj disorder or Kapha Prakriti. (Atul, U., Charu, B., & Umesh, S. 2020)

4. Discussion

Prakriti refers to the inherent constitution or natural disposition of an individual, shaped primarily by their genetic makeup. In Ayurvedic philosophy, this unique constitution is believed to be determined at the time of conception, during the union of the sperm and ovum. The relative dominance of the three Doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—establishes one's Prakriti, which governs various physical, mental, and physiological traits. This innate constitution influences an individual's overall health, their reaction to environmental stimuli, the way they respond to medications, and their predisposition to certain diseases. The Panchakarma therapy, a key component of Ayurvedic cleansing and rejuvenation, is customized based on multiple factors including the individual's Prakriti, the prevailing Dosha imbalance, the geographical context (Desha), and the appropriate timing (Kala). Panchakarma is five penta purificatory methods in Ayurveda. Sodhana and Samnan therapy are two part Ayurveda treatment. Pathya Apathya after Panchakarma Procedure is related with Dosha predominant of body. Without proper assessment of individual Prakriti, Panchakarma Procedure is a difficult task. Before Panchakarma procedure doshik predominant assessment of body or essential Prakriti assessment is needed. Dose fixation, drugs selection, season and time assessment for different therapeutic procedure is depend according to the Prakriti and dosha predominant of body.

5. Conclusion

Growing research continues to uncover significant connections between the Ayurvedic concept of Tridosha and contemporary scientific markers, including those in biochemistry and genetics. In Ayurvedic philosophy, Prakriti refers to an individual's inherent constitution, which is believed to be genetically determined and established at the very moment of conception, when the sperm and ovum merge in the womb. Panchakarma is five penta purificatory methods in Ayurveda. Sodhana and Samnan therapy are two part Ayurveda treatment. Pathya Apathya after Panchakarma Procedure is related with Dosha predominant of body. Without proper assessment of individual Prakriti, Panchakarma Procedure is a difficult task. Before Panchakarma procedure doshik predominant assessment of body or essential Prakriti assessment is needed. Dose fixation, dugs selection, season and time assessment for different therapeutic procedure is depend according to the Prakriti and dosha predominant of body. This advances the idea of personalized medicine by extending it into the realm of individualized preventive healthcare or customized preventive treatment strategies.

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