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Review Article

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Shatkriyakala Concept and its Importance in Disease Diagnosis and Treatment: A Review

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Abstract

Ayurveda aims towards the maintenance of health of a healthy person and helps to curing the diseases of diseased person. Ayurveda suggested various therapeutic approaches for maintaining balances of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*. Similarly ayurveda described mentioned different modalities of disease diagnosis and *Kriyakala* is one such modality which helps to recognize various stages of disease progression. The concept of *Kriyakala* provides benefits to plant appropriate treatment according to the stage of disease progression. The appropriate measures can be taken to correct the balances of *Doshas* in particular stages of disease. Ayurveda explored the concept of *Shatkriyakala* as a “six stages of disease progression” in which the pathogenesis of disease can be assessed in different stages. This article explained six stages of *Shatkriyakala*, its importance in disease diagnosis and treatment. The modern correlation of *Shatkriyakala* also described in present article.

Keywords: *Ayurveda, Kriyakala, Shatkriyakala, Disease Progression, Pathogenesis*

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1. Introduction

The term *Kriyakala* comprises two words *Kriya* and *Kala*, where *Kriya* means the choice of treatment used to correct disturbance of *Doshas*, and *Kala* means stages of diseases progression. The concept of *Kriyakala* helps to assess the prognosis of disease stage wise. *Kriyakala* provides knowledge about diagnosis and intervention of disease as per the intensity of *Doshas* vitiation. (1-3)

The concept of *Kriyakala* recognizes various stages of disease progression, *Sushruta* mentioned concept of *Kriyakala* in *Varnaprashnadhyaaya* and this concept further elaborated as *Shatkriyakala* (six stages of disease progression). *Acharya Sushruta* gives six stages and gives an idea about the state of the disease and appropriate therapeutic intervene to be adopted according to the disease progression. The advantage of this concept is that it helps in early diagnosis of diseases thus disease can be cured in early stage. The appropriate treatment can be planned according to the progressive stage of disease. (3-7)

The imbalance of *Doshas* can be corrected as per the *Kala* or severity of disease thus patient get early relief disease cured completely. As per the concept of *Shatkriyakala* the six stages of disease progression are as follows:

- a) *Sanchaya* (Stage of Accumulation)
- b) *Prakopa* (Stage of Aggregation)
- c) *Prasara* (Stage of Dissemination)
- d) *Sthanasamshraya* (Stage of Localization)
- e) *Vyaktavastha* (Stage of Manifestation)
- f) *Bhedavastha* (Stage of Complication)

Sanchaya is stage of accumulation of *Dosha* in their own places; *Prakopa* described as stage of aggregation of *Doshas* gradually, *Prasara* is described as stage of dissemination in which aggravated *Doshas* leaves their places and distributed throughout the other sites of body. *Sthanasamshraya* is stage of localization in which agitated *Doshas* occupied in body channels and produces

Khavaigunya in channels. The *Vyaktavastha* is stage of manifestation in which symptoms of the disease get manifested and *Bhedavastha* is final stage of disease pathogenesis which described as stage of complication in

which chronicity of symptoms and complication of disease occurs. (7-9) The progression of disease may occur as depicted in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. General events associated with pathological progression of diseases

a). Sanchaya avastha (Stage of Accumulation):

Progressive collection of *Doshas* in their own places occurs in this stage; this stage initiates pathogenesis of disease. *Doshas* accumulate in their respective seats and exhibits following symptoms:

- ✓ *Vata Sanchaya Lakshana*: Stiffness and fullness in abdomen.
- ✓ *Pitta Sanchaya Lakshana*: Slight rise in body temperature and burning senses.
- ✓ *Kapha Sanchaya Lakshana*: Feeling of heaviness

The management of morbid *Doshas* in this stage prevents further spread of *Doshas* into next stage. The condition of disease pathogenesis in this stage can be managed easily since severity of disease is very low and *Doshas* vitiation is not incensed.

b). Prakopa avastha (Stage of Vitiating):

In this stage *Doshas* ready to move from their own place to another place. The continuous indulgence in *Nidana* i.e.; improper *Ahara* and *Vihara* may leads *Prakopa avastha*. The symptoms of this stage are as follows:

- ✓ *Vata Prakopa Lakshana*: *Koshta toda sancharana*
- ✓ *Pitta Prakopa Lakshana*: *Amlika* and *Paridaha*.
- ✓ *Kapha Prakopa Lakshana*: *Annadweshha* and *Hridiyotkledascha*

c). Prasara avastha (Stage of Dissemination):

In this stage aggravated *Doshas* leave their places and moves to other parts of body and spread through different *Strotas*. This stage may produce following symptoms:

- ✓ *Vata Prasara Lakshana*: *Atopa* and *Vimarga-Gamana*.
- ✓ *Pitta Prasara Lakshana*: *Chosha*, *Osha* and *Dhoomayanani*.
- ✓ *Kapha Prasara Lakshana*: *Avipaka*, *Angasada* and *Chardi*.

Doshas travels at different places along with *Vayu*, thus on this basis *Prasara* can be of different types including; *Vata Prasara*, *Pitta Prasara*, *Kapha Prasara*, *Rakta Prasara*, *Vata Pitta Prasara*, *Vata Kapha Prasara*, *Vata Rakta Prasara*, *Pitta Kapha Prasara*, *Pitta Rakta Prasara*, *Kapha Rakta Prasara*, *Vata Pitta Rakta Prasara*, *Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara*, *Vata Pitta Kapha Prasara*, *Vata Kapha Rakta Prasara* and *Vata Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara*.

d). Sthanasamshraya avastha (Stage of Localization):

The abnormality in *Srotas* causes obstruction of the *Doshas*, the vitiated *Doshas* can vitiate organ and produces a disease of that particular organs in which morbid *Dosha* gets accumulated. This stage exhibits premonitory signs and symptoms (*Poorva rupa*) of disease.

e). Vyaktavastha (Stage of Manifestation):

The signs and symptoms can be observed in this stage, thus *Vyaktavastha* is considered as stage of manifestation. The main symptoms can be seen in this stage thus treatment can be planned accordingly. The *Vyadhi Pratyanyika Chikitsa* may be adopted in this stage to prevent further progression of disease.

f). Bhedavastha (Stage of Complication):

Bhedha is final stage of disease progression in which complications of disease may observe and origin of other diseases may take places. The prognosis is very

poor in this stage and untreated condition may become incurable. This stage is very difficult to treat and complication may affect health significantly leading to the death. (9-11)

2. Importance of *Shatakriyakala*

- ✚ This concept helps to assess progress of disease.
- ✚ Helps to prevent further accumulation of *Hetu*.
- ✚ This concept provides information about disease causing factors thus prevent measures can be adopted.
- ✚ *Shatkriyakala* assures accurate management of disease and helps to plan suitable treatment regimen.
- ✚ The information about *Sthanasamshraya* may help to prevent healthy organ to get affected by disease.
- ✚ The *Sadhyasadhyatva* of disease can be explored based on the stage of *Shatkriyakala* (progressive stage of disease).
- ✚ The concept of *Shatkriyakala* helps to assist complete pathogenesis of disease.

3. Conclusion

The knowledge about disease progression helps to plan preventive and therapeutic measures. According to the specific disease manifestation and progression the appropriate guidelines of *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya* can be adopted to further prevent disease progression. The six stages of disease progression described as *Shatkriyakala* in Ayurveda and this concept helps greatly towards the prevention and management of diseases. *Kriyakala* as *Chikitsavasara* referred to the time of treatment during the disease manifestation. *Shatkriyakala* helps to assess patho-physiology of disease and physician can diagnose at any stage and plan accordingly. The disease prevention in early stage prevents further progression of the disease. *Shatkriyakala* is helpful in the prediction of *Sadhyasadhyatva* of disease and provides ways to completely eradicate morbid *Doshas* and their manifestation. The Ayurveda concept of *Shatkriyakala* works towards the early prevention and treatment of disease.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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