A literary review of *doshagati* in reference to *kostha* and *shakha* as mentioned in ayurvedic texts.

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**ABSTRACT**

Doshagati is discussed by *charakacharya* (chu.su.17) which gives great clinical importance to the diagnostic (*Roga* Nidan) point of view. Gati means movement and the word Doshagati implies to movement of doshas. All the movements and activities in the body, take place due to vata. Vata is the key force behind the physiological and pathological movement of body element. Tridosha is the prime fundamental principle of Ayurveda, imbalance state of which is termed as Roga/ Vikara. Knowledge of Doshagati is a fundamental concept of Ayurveda. Its diagnostic and therapeutic usefulness is mentioned in Ayurvedic classics. In “Kiyantashirsiya Adhyaya”, Maharshi Charaka illustrated Dvididha Doshagati is Prakrut- Vikrut gati and Trividh doshagati i.e Kshaya- Sthan- Vruddhi, Urdhva- Adho- Tiryak, Shakha- Koshtha- Marmasthisandhi.

Charakacharya enriched Ayurveda with the knowledge of Doshagati. To limit the subject I have focused on koshtha and shakha gati of doshas.

**KEYWORDS**-

Doshagati, Koshtha, Shakha, Doshas, Kshaya, Vruddhi.

**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda has expounded a principal of Tridoshavada. Ayurvedacharya explicate Saama dosha as the condition of healthiness. Vaat, Pitta, Kapha are somatic doshas and are verily are the causative agents of the origin of the body. Doshas destroy the body when they are abnormal and support the body when they are normal. Health can be summarized as prakrut gati of doshas whereas vikrut gati describes illness.

Doshagati is the fundamental concept of Ayurveda. Any thought pertaining to swastha- atur is incomplete ignoring conceptual thinking of Doshagati.
Chakrapanidutta stated that doshagati is nothing but different awastha such as kshaya, prakopa etc. Doshagati is a condition in the sites of doshas depending on its equilibrium or unequilibrium state. In equilibrium state, doshas are present in their own site and performs its normal functions and whereas in inequilibrium state doshas are in hypo state or hyper state. Doshagati occurs in Rogamarga(pathway of disease) which includes shakha (sharir dhatu or body tissues excluding rasadhatu or plasma and including the twak or skin). Koshtha (hollow organs and cavernous spaces or cavities of the body and marma (vital organs). There are are so many scattered references related to Doshagati have been seen in Samhita Granthas. Compilation of these scattered references has been done in this review article.

AIM
To study the concept of Doshagati in Koshtha and Shakha.

OBJECTIVES
1) Literature review of Doshagati with special reference to koshtha and shakha gati.
2) Importance of Vaat dosha in different types of Doshagati.
3) To study the concept of Shakha and Koshtha.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Proper screening of literature from classic texts of Ayurveda.
Recent advanced study in context of present study will be reviewed using resources like internet and articles.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE-
Movement of Dosha is called Doshagati. All the movements and activities in the body take place due to Vata. Vata is the key force behind the physiological and pathological movements of body elements. Pitta, Kapha, Malas(excreta), Dhatus (tissues) are all lame. They don’t have independent movement in the body. They move from one place to other only when propelled, mobilized or motivated by Vata, just like the clouds only move when pushed by the air. This movement is called “Gati”.( Sha. Pu 5/25)

Gati of Vayu is provided by its Chala guna (quality of movement). Vata dosha is made up of Vayu and Akash Mahabhut. This makes Vata all pervading, quickly moving, expansive and invasive. Gati of Vata is usually downwards. When it moves upwards (pratiloma gati) it causes many disorders and disturbs many functions.

Various dimensions of Gati-
Gati indicate the below mentioned aspects of Doshas-

- **Gati means status of Doshas-**
  - **Kshaya** – Depletion in quality and quantity of the Doshas.
Sthan- normalcy of the Doshas.
Vriddhi- increase in Doshas.

- **Gati means movement of Doshas-**
  - Urdhva Gati- Upward movement of the Doshas.
  - Adho Gati- Downward movement of the Doshas.
  - Tiryak Gati-Sideward or oblique movement of the Doshas.

- **Gati means the localization of doshas at apoint of time-**
  - Shakha Gati- localization of doshas in shakha or tissues.
  - Koshtha Gati- localization of doshas in viscera.
  - Marma- asthi- sandhi Gati- localization of doshas in vital points of the body, bones and joints of the body.

**Concept of Koshtha –**

Koshtha is derived from root Kush+Than. Koshtha is a cavity formed from Avarana (wall) which is consisting of Dhatus (solid structure). Koshtha is known as Mahastrotasa (the great channel) which is from mouth to the anus i.e. complete digestive system and as Abhyantara Roga Marga (internal pathway of diseases).

Charaka states that Koshtha is the cavity containing fifteen organs - umbilicus, heart, pancreas, liver, spleen, kidneys, bladder, lungs, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, rectum, anus, Pakwashaya (large intestine including pelvic colon), Purishadhara (the cecum).

Sushruta states that Koshtha is a cavity containing heart, lungs, stomach, intestine, rectum, pancreas and urinary bladder.

**Concept of Shakha-**

Shakha is derived from root Shakh+Ach+Tap. Shakha means Dhatu (branches of solid structures) that form Avarana (wall) of cavity. Shakha includes the Raktadi (blood cells) Dhatu and Twaka (skin). The term Shakha means branches of a tree.

In body, this relates to the peripheral system comprising blood, tissues, skin and Rasa (plasma) Dhatu which is spread throughout the body like branches of a tree.

**Koshtha to Shakha Doshagati-**

In Shakhagata Doshagati, vitiated Dosha moves from Koshtha to Shakha. The concept of Doshagati is constructed as the movement of Dosha from its primary seat i.e. Koshtha to any other site, under specific condition.

**Etiological factors of Koshtha to Shakha Doshagati-**

There are 4 etiological factors that are responsible for the movement of doshas from Koshtha to Shakha as following-
1. **Vyayamat**-
   Excessive exercise leads to vitiation of Vata and increase in body heat which helps in dislodgement of the Doshas from alimentary tract to the periphery.

2. **Usmanah Taikshnyat**-
   In pathological condition, these qualities are intensified. These are responsible for liquefaction of Doshas and dilatation of channels leading to Prakopa or Prasara stage of pitta and kaphadoshas in which Dosha travels from Koshtha to Shakha.

3. **Ahitacharanat**-
   It refers to intake of excess of unwholesome food leads to vitiation of Doshas resulting in increase in quantity and overflow like flood.

4. **Drutatvat Marutasya**-
   The vitiated Doshas deviated from normal direction by the force of Vata, moves from Koshtha to Shakha. The vitiated doshas having spread to the periphery do not invariably manifest disease. If they are not strong enough to cause disease, they remain in quiescent stage and await suitable time and place for the manifestation of their effects.

   Doshas strongly aggravated, however, do not remain in quiescent stage, they immediately manifest disease.

**Shakha to Koshtha Doshagati**-
In Koshthagat Doshagati, vitiated doshas move from Shakha to Koshtha. The concept of Doshagati is constructed as the Doshas leave the periphery and move to the central part of the body i.e. the alimentary tract. This type of Doshagati occurs after treatment of disease i.e. during recovery of disease.

**Etiological factors of Shakha to Koshtha Doshagati**-
There are 5 etiological factors that are responsible for the movement of Doshas from Shakha to Koshtha as follows-

- **Vriddhi**-
   It means the quantitative increase in dosha which fill up their srotases completely and try to come back to Koshtha.

- **Vishyandana**-
   It causes liquefaction of Doshas which is helpful when Doshas are in Leena Awastha, sticky and solid in nature. Liquefication leads to movement of Dosha towards Koshtha.
• **Paaka** –
  It means to digest. When Doshas are in Sama Awastha, they stick to the channels and obstruct srotas, and then it is difficult to detach them. Through Pachana Doshas detached from srotas and comes back to Koshtha easily.

• **Srotomukha Vishodhana** -
  It means dilation of opening of Srotas. In pathology of diseases, Srotas are blocked due to Sama Doshas or other material. After removal of blockage, Doshas return to Koshtha.

• **Vatanigraha** -
  It means control of Vayu or pacification of Vayu. It brings back vitiated Vata to its own place.

**DISCUSSION**-
Ayurveda is designed for healthy and long lifespan. This aim is fulfilled by its sound and absolute principles. Dosha are basic principle of Ayurveda and Doshagati is very important principle as it plays important role in treatment. So the basic knowledge of Doshagati is important. Doshagati can be clinically assessed with help of signs and symptoms which are helpful in various clinical studies.

Symptoms of Doshagati from Shakha to Koshtha are explained during Shodhana therapy. Normally in the body Doshagati occurs but it does not cause disease. From various symptoms, site of Dosha can be assessed. This is helpful in deciding the line of treatment. If vitiated Dosha are present in Koshtha then Shodhana is selected as line for treatment and if vitiated Dosha are presents in Shakha then Shamana (palliative therapy) is selected as line for treatment. But if Shodhana is necessary, Dosha are first carried to Koshtha and then eliminated by Shodhana.

**CONCLUSION**-
From the discussion, it is clear that Doshagati is important for treatment point of view and is only assessed with the help of etiological factors, signs and symptoms. Doshagatis are nothing but different Awastha such as Kshaya, Prakopa, movement of doshas from shakha to koshtha and vice versa. Knowledge of Doshagati is useful in diagnosis of diseases. The etiological factors mentioned in the above article which are responsible for the movement of doshas from koshtha to shakha and vice versa are helpful in diagnosis and staging of diseases, understanding pathogenesis, deciding proper line of treatment,
Oushadha Sevana Kala and Samshodhana Kala.

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Conflict of Interest: Non

Cite this article:

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