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# Concept of *Dhatu*, *Dhatu Poshana* with reference to *Sharira Bala*

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## ABSTRACT

A *Dhatu* is that entity which supports the body and also provides nourishment to the body. *Bala* is the energetic source required for nourishment, development, defence mechanism of body and it is the very essential factor responsible for providing strength to the body as well as mind. Through this *bala* with a person tends to perform his/her work both physically (*sharirik*) and mentally (*manasika*). This *bala* also yield *Vyadhikshamatva* which implies prevention of the occurrence of new disease and retarding the progression of existing disease. Excellence of *bala* in terms of *oja* are characterized by good memory, devotion, gratefulness, wisdom, purity, excessive enthusiasm, skill, courage velour in fighting, absence of sorrow, proper gait, and depth of wisdom.

**Key words:** *Bala, Dhatu, Oja, Vyadhikshamatva, Rasa, Dhatuposhan.*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is based on the principle of *dhatu samyata* and *doshasamyta* as its imbalance affects health. A *Dhatu* is that entity which supports the body and also provides nourishment to the body. Acharya Sushruta says the ultimate essence of all the *Dhatu* beginning with *Rasa* (*rasa, rakta, mamsa, meda, asthi, majja* and *shukra*) and ending with *Shukra* is known as *ojas* and the same is also called *bala*. *Charaka* has used this term in the context of the description of *Srotamsi* or the internal transport system of nutrition required for *dhatuposhan*. According to Acharya Charaka, *Dhatu*s are of two kinds viz *Asthayi* or *Poshaka* and *Sthayi* or *Poshya*. He has stated that *Srotamsi* do not transport

*Sthira Dhatu*s, *Dhatu* that are formed consecutively one after another from the *Poshaka* or nutrient *Dhatu*s.<sup>[1]</sup> *Dhatvagnis* are also moieties of *Bhutagnis* but as they are situated in the *Dhatu*s they termed as '*Dhatvagnis*' due to *SthanaVishesha*. He has stated that *Srotamsi* transport the *Dhatu*s which are undergoing metabolic transformations.<sup>[2]</sup>

According to Bhavaprakasha, *Bala* is the ability to carry out '*Chestas*' (includes coition, exercise, physical work etc.) and it is termed as *Bala*.<sup>[3]</sup> *Bala* is the very essential factor responsible for providing strength to the body as well as mind. Through this *bala* (*sharir* and *mansik*) a person tends to perform his/her work both physically (*sharirik*) and mentally (*manasika*). It is so because of *Bala* that one could withstand through morbid condition or maintain a healthy life. However sedentary lifestyle has given man almost every type of happiness; pleasure without a much efforts. This has made man lethargic somehow compromising and affecting the health factor overall by reducing overall *bala* of human.

*Ojas* and *bala* in body clarifies the cause effect association where *ojas* is cause and *bala* or strength being the ultimate effect of the same. Our physical, mental and spiritual strength totally depends on *ojas*

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which is manifested by its own symptoms.<sup>[4]</sup> By virtue of *bala*, there is a strong and well-formed musculature, proper functioning of all motor activities, clear voice, bright complexion and proper functioning of all the sensory, motor and psychic functions.<sup>[5]</sup>

For the assessment of *Bala* of person *Sara* examination is essential of individual *Dhatu* as well as collectively by the *Sapta dhatu*. It is difficult to judge *Bala* of any individuals according to his appearance like plump or emaciated body or by large or small sized body.<sup>[6]</sup>

### OBJECTIVES

To study the Concept of *Dhatu*, *dhatuposhan* with reference to *Sharirbala*.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Literary source:** Review of *Sharir Dhatu*, *Dhatuposhan*, *Sarata*, *Oja*, *Bala* was done from various Samhitas, review also done from Ayurveda textbooks, thesis and papers published in the international journals etc.

#### *Dhatu Poshana*

The process of *Dhatu Poshana* is also known as *Suksma Pachana*, when the *Ahara Rasa* absorbed from the *Adho-Amasaya* it is taken to *Hrudaya* with the help of *Samana Vayu* and then transported to the *Dhatu*s with the help of *Vyana Vayu*. *Dhatu poshan* theories postulated by the *Tikakaras* these are as follows:

- 1) *Kshira Dadhi Nyaya*
- 2) *Kedarakulya Nyaya*
- 3) *Khale Kapota Nyaya*

#### Concepts of *Dhatu Poshan Nyaya*

When the *Ahara Rasa* is distributed in the body first *Rasa Dhatu* is nourished then followed by *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi Majja* and last the most essence of all *Dhatu*s i.e. *Shukra* gets nourishment.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Dalhana* on has given the relation of the *Dhatu*s with *Mahabhutas*.<sup>[8]</sup>

1. *Rasa Dhatu* - *Aap Mahabhuta*
2. *Rakta Dhatu* - *Teja + Aap*
3. *Mamsa Dhatu* - *Prthvi*
4. *Meda Dhatu* - *Aap + Prthvi*
5. *Asthi Dhatu* - *Prthvi + Vayu + Teja, (Prthvi + Vayu) (Chakra)*
6. *Majja Dhatu* - *Aap*
7. *Shukra* - *Aap*

Dominancy of a specific *Mahabhuta* may increase those *Dhatu*s which renders same qualities of those *Mahabhutas*. This can be better explained based on *Samanya -Visesha Siddhanta*. Proceeding since the Ayurvedic principle "The general (similar) or *Samanya* is the cause of increase (*Vruddhi*) of all things at all times and the particular (dissimilar) or *Vishesa* is the cause of decrease. The general (Similar) or *Samanya* combines and the particular (dissimilar) or *Vishesa* differentiates.

#### *Dhatu and Bala relationship*<sup>[9],[10]</sup>

*Rasa Dhatu* is produced soon after digestion in the body. It can be grossly compared to plasma part of blood. Its basic function is *Preenana* – to nourish all the body tissues. Decrease of *Rasa dhatu* specifies dehydration, and lack of nutrients. The symptoms are patient becomes restless, he does not stand loud sounds, becomes intolerant; palpitation, cardiac pain, exhaustion even with the slightest exertion. All these symptoms can be correlated with the symptoms of dehydration / lack of nutrition.

*Rakta Dhatu* can be compared directly with blood and its component. It is formed by receiving the nourishment from *Rasa Dhatu*. Its main function is *Jeevana* – enlivening. Depletion of blood tissue causes symptoms of anemia, which are explained as roughness, cracks, dullness, skin dryness, loss of tension of veins (and arteries) and dryness which produces *Balakshaya*.

*Mamsa Dhatu* - It is compared with muscle tissue; its main function is *Lepana*. It gives shape to the body parts and it sticks to the bones, helping in locomotor

activities. Depletion of muscle tissue directly causes weakening of limbs and causes *Sphik, Greeva Udara Shushkata* – emaciation of the buttocks, neck and abdomen. According to Vagbhata decrease of *Mamsa* causes debility of the sense organs, emaciation of cheeks, buttocks and pain in the joints which decrease the *bala* of body.

**Meda Dhatu** - It is compared to fat tissue, gets nourished by *Mamsa Dhatu*. Its main function is *Snehana* – lubrication. According to Vagbhat decrease of *Medas* causes loss of sensation in the waist, enlargement of spleen and emaciation of the body which decrease the *bala* of body.

**Asthi Dhatu** - It is compared to bone tissue, gets nourished by *Meda Dhatu* and its main function is *Dharana* – to hold the body up straight. According to Vagbhata decrease of *Asthi* causes pain in the joints, falling off of the teeth, hairs, nails etc. which decrease the *bala* of body.

**Majja Dhatu** - It is compared to bone marrow and all the tissue that fill bone cavity. Its main function is *Poorana* – to fill in the bone cavities. According to Vagbhata Decrease of *Majja* causes hollowness (of the bones inside) giddiness and seeing of darkness which decrease the *bala* of body.

**Shukra Dhatu** - It is compared with male and female reproductive system and its secretions its main function is *Garbhotpadana* – reproduction. It gets nourishment from *Majja Dhatu*. According to Vagbhata Decrease of *Shukra* results in delay in ejaculation, ejaculation accompanied with bleeding, severe pain in the testicles and a feeling of hot fumes coming out of the urethra which decrease the *bala* of body.

*Bala* is the energetic source required for nourishment, development, defence mechanism of body. Ayurveda also defines a unique thing '*Oja*' which has the strength to keep body, senses, mind and soul together in functional harmony.

The *oja bala* is then classified in three categories<sup>[11]</sup>

1. *Sahaj bala* (Primary) - It is primary immunity which is gained or transferred from generation to generation.

2. *Kalajbala* (Acquired) - It is a type of acquired immunity which is dependent on environmental factors such as climate, age.

3. *Yuktikrutbala* (Artificial) - It is the immunity which is either induced or gained by nutritive diet regimen, exercise and healthy workouts.

### Bala Pariksha

In about all the Ayurvedic texts *Bala Pariksha* is described intensely. It is said that before starting the treatment, a physician should always examine *Bala Pramana, Doshapramangyana, Ayupraman* and *Aushadhpramangyana*. *Bala* depends upon *Sharira, Indriya, Mana* and *Atma*. The examination of these entities gradually becomes microscopic. In other words, the analysis of *Indriya-Bala* is difficult from *Sharira-Bala; Mano-Bala* from *Indriya-Bala; Atma-Bala* from *Mano-Bala*. To know the *Deha Balapramana dashvidha pariksha* (ten-fold) examinations has been supposed.<sup>[12]</sup>

### DISCUSSION

Since the *Vaidika* era the concept of *Bala* have conquered at all the ways of life and all the living organisms. *Bala* was considered important not only for ruling or dominating over others but also to protect themselves from various attacks. The medical science has also given much more significance to the *Bala* especially *Atmabala* (self-confidence of power) in relation to health and disease conditions and as such Ayurveda has got its original and basic concept of *Bala*. All types of movements become smooth without any obstruction, voice and complexion become pleasant and functions of external sense organs along with organs of functions are smooth. All these functions again indicate nourishment of body by *bala*. The homeostatic balance between body's biological entities viz. *dosha, dhatu, mala, agni* and psychological entities viz. *Atma, indriya, mana* ultimately responsible for the *vyadhikhyamtva*.<sup>[13]</sup> *Apara oja* especially is responsible to sustain the immunity in body. It provides the nutrition to body and its components by enhancing the immune strength. *Vyadhikshamatva* implies prevention of the



occurrence of new disease and retarding the progression of existing disease.

Immunology has its roots in Ayurved science also which are referred through this *oja* and *bala*. *Oja* contains antibodies and cells which develop the immunity power of body. Any disease to be retarded is mainly achieved by significantly positive and imposing status of *Ojabala* and *Doshabala*.

## CONCLUSION

*Bala* is responsible for all physical as well as mental activity in the human being. Individuals having the excellence *bala* in terms of *oja* are characterized by good memory, devotion, gratefulness, wisdom, purity, excessive enthusiasm, skill, courage velour in fighting, absence of sorrow, proper gait, and depth of wisdom. *Oja* which is universal is essence of all the *dhatu*s is responsible for *bala*, immunity in body.

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