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## Conceptual study of Rogamarga

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### ABSTRACT

*Roga Marga* concept is a unique contribution for the field of Ayurveda. It is being explained in *Nirdesha Chatuska* in *Tisraishaneeya Aadhyaya* of *Charaka Samhita*. After explaining *Triniyatanani* and *Trayoroga*, *Trayorogamarga* is explained, this indicates the importance of topic. The pathway of disease is considered to be as *Rogamarga*. The basis of *Roga Marga* is the *Gati* of *Doshas*. The healthy relationship of *Doshas* with the *Dhatu*s (tissues) and organs in a specific way is termed as *Doshagati*. The specific relation in pathological progress is termed as *Roga Marga*. Therefore in disease stage *Doshagati* is the cause and *Vyadhimarga* is the effect. *Rogamarga* has got its importance not only in the field of prognosis but also in the field of therapeutics. This article emphasizes the summary based on the concept of *Trividha Roga Marga*.

**Key words:** Ayurveda, Roga Marga, Doshagati, Shakha, Bahya, Madhyama, Abhyantara, Koshta.

### INTRODUCTION

Under pathological and healthy conditions *Doshas* behave in different pattern in regard to their direction of spreading and area of localization and manifestation. Because of that certain categories of diseases connected with the direction of *Doshas*, *Doshagati* are produced. The basis of *Rogamargas* is the *Gati* of the *Doshas*. The concept of *Doshagati* is described as the movement of *Doshas* from the principle seat or specific state of *Doshas* under specific conditions. During normal body physiology *Doshas* move from *Koshta* to *Shakha* and *Shakha* to *Koshta*. But the vitiated *Doshas* move from *Koshta* to *Shakha* and *Marmasthisandhi*, producing diseases in the body.

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When vitiated *Doshas* move from their principal abode *Koshta*, they follow certain specific routes termed as *Rogamargas*. *Rogamargas* are not the casual agents of *Rogas* but only the substrates.<sup>[1]</sup> Therefore in the manifestation of disease, *Doshagati* is the cause and *Vyadhimarga* is the effect.

The topic *Rogamarga* indicates relationship between different *Dhatu*s and *Ashyas* in a unique way. The *Nidanaas* or factors that vitiate these *Doshas* make these factors to follow certain specific pathways. The *Vikruita Doshas* tend to move through selected tissue and organs i.e. In *Koshta*, *Shakha* and *Marma Asthi Sandhigati*. The affinity of noxious *Dosha* towards tissue and organs manifesting a disease or pathological progress is *Rogamarga*.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Classical texts were reviewed to get the knowledge about *Rogamarga*. Materials were explored through available texts, published article and authentic websites. The collected materials were critically analyzed and conclusion was drawn.

### Definition

*Rogamarga* the word comprises of two words *Roga* and *Marga*.

*Roga* - which causes pain is called as *Roga*,<sup>[2]</sup> the disequilibrium status of *Doshas* is also known as *Roga* while health is equilibrium of *Doshas*.<sup>[3]</sup>

*Marga* - *Srotas* (channel / path way)

The pathway of disease is considered to be as *Roga Marga*.

### Classification of Rogamarga

There are 3 *Roga Margas*<sup>[4]</sup> on the basis of *Gati*. Namely *Shakha*, *Marma Asthi Sandhi* and *Koshta*.

<i>Shakha Marga (Bahya)</i>	<i>Doshas make Gamana in Raktadidhatus.</i>
<i>Marmasthi Sandhimarga (Madhyama)</i>	<i>Doshas make Gamana in Marma, Asthi and Sandhi.</i>
<i>Koshtha Marga (Abhyantara)</i>	<i>Doshas make Gamana in Koshtaangas.</i>

### Trividha Roga Marga

#### 1) Shakha or Bahya Rogmarga

Acharya Hemadri quotes *Bahya Rogamarga*, as *Bahirmargoroganam*<sup>[5]</sup> and Arundatta quotes *Bahyanaamroganamayanamsthanam*.<sup>[6]</sup> This gives the meaning of *Bahyarogamarga* as the pathways of external disease.

The term *Shakha* illustrates *Rakthadidhatu* and *Tvak*.<sup>[7]</sup> *Chakrapani* defines that by the term *Tvak*, the factor residing in it, *Rasadhatu* is also implied. *Shaka* includes *Tvak* and other six *Dhatus*, like this all the *Sevendhatus* are included in one *Path Bahyaroga Marga*.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### 2) Marmasthi Sandhi Roga Marga (Madhyama Rogamarga)

According to Acharya Hemadri, *Marmanimarmanibdhahashiradayaschya, asthisandhyahate cha Madhyamoroga Marga*.<sup>[9]</sup>

The *Gati* of vitiated *Doshas* through *Marmaasthi Sandhi* will produce and *Madhyama Roga Marga* (middle disease pathway). This includes the *Mahamarmas*.<sup>[10]</sup> *Basti* (bladder), *Hridaya* (heart), *Shira* (head) and *Asthi* (bones), *Sandhi* (joints), which includes the associated *Sira* (vein), *Snayu* (muscle),

*Kandara* (ligaments), *Dhamani*, *Kurcha* are *Madhyama Rogamargas*.

#### 3) Koshtagata Rogamarga

Acharya Hemadri quotes *Anthahaanthamargo Roganam*.<sup>[11]</sup> By virtue of this definition, it is interpreted as internal pathway of diseases. *Vagbhata* considered it as *Anthakoshta* i.e., *Amashaya* (stomach), *Pakwashaya* (intestine), and *Mahasrotas*.

It is defined as *Sareeramadhya* or *Mahanimna*, the hollow portion of the body extending from the buccal cavity to the anus. Its synonyms are *Mahasrotas*, *Sareeramadhyam*, *Mahanimnam*, *Amapakvasaya Asrayam*, *Anthakoshta* and *Antharadhi*.<sup>[12]</sup>

Acharya Susruta uses the term *Koshta* in a way in which includes *Amashaya*, *Pakwashaya*, *Agnyasaya*, *Mutrasaya*, *Rudhirasaya*, *Hridaya*, *Unduka* and *Phuphusa*.<sup>[13]</sup>

#### Significance of Rogamarga<sup>[14]</sup>

- The knowledge of *Rogamarga* helps to understand the *Doshagati*, thereby in understanding the disease process and its diagnosis.
- It facilitates the knowledge about prognosis of disease in the respective *Rogamargas*.
- Disease caused by single *Dosha* afflicting one of the *Rogmargas* with *Chatushpaad* is a sign of good prognosis (*Sukhasadhya*).
- Diseases occurring in *Marmaasthisandhi* are a sign of bad prognosis (*Kruchrasadhya*).
- When *Doshas* are seated in the deeper *Dhatus* like *Meda* etc. involving the *Dhatus* and *Marmaasthisandhi* it is an indication and palatability (*Yaapya*).
- If disease is manifested by involving all the *Margas* it clearly indicates the incurability (*Prathyakhyeya*). Example: If *Vata* is accumulated *Aamashya* the *Swedana* is done initially with *Rookshadravyas*, if *Kapha* is accumulated in *Pakwashaya* the *Singdhasweda* is done initially followed by

*Rookshasweda*. This is an example for the use of *Vyadhimarga* in *Chikitsa*.

- There are some disease like *Arsha* which occurs on two *Margas* like *Bahya* and *Abhyantara* depends on *Doshagati* and *Vyadhi Marga* further *Chikitsa* is planned. For instance, *Arsha* in *Bahya Marga* is *Shashtrakrata*, *Arsha* in *Abhyantaramarga* is *Ashashtrakrta Chikitsa*.
- When treating the *Sthanika Doshas* care is taken not to disturb the *Agantu Doshas*. This is possible only with the knowledge of *Rogamarga*.
- It is useful on the diagnosis and treatment of disease conditions like *Vishamamargas* since it is consider as a *Dhatujanya Vikara*.
- The knowledge of *Vyadhimarga* and *Doshagati* helps not only in diagnosing a disease but also guides in planning treatment of diseases. For instance, *Koshtagatha Doshas* are better removed with *Vaman* and *Virechana*. For *Shakhagata Doshas Raktamokshana* will be the better therapy.

**Table 1: Showing diseases of each Rogamarga.**<sup>[15]</sup>

Rogamarga	Diseases
<i>Shakamarga</i>	<i>Ganda, Pidaka, Alaji, Apachi, Charmakila, Adhimamasa, Mashaka, Kushta, Vyanga, External varieties of Visarpa, Shwayatu, Gulma, Arsha, Vidhradi.</i>
<i>Marmaasthisandhimarga</i>	<i>Pakshavadha, Pakshagraha, Apatanaka, Ardita, Sosha, Rajayakshma, Asthisula, Sandhisula, Gudabramsha, Sirorogas, Hridayarogas, Vastirogas.</i>
<i>Koshtamarga</i>	<i>Jwara, Atisara, Charadi, Alasaka, Visucika, Kasa, Svasa, Hikka, Aanaha, Udara, Pliha. Internal varieties of Visarpa, Svayathu, Gulma, Arsha, Vidhradi.</i>

## DISCUSSION

*Rogamarga* means the specific path where the diseases occur. According to Acharya Charaka, the

term *Shakha* illustrates *Raktadi Dhatus* and *Twak*. In this *Shakha Marga*, the word *Rasa* is not mentioned because *Rasadhatu* is *Moola*<sup>[16]</sup> and from *Rasadhatu* the other *Dhatus* are formed.<sup>[17]</sup> *Twacha* gets formed after the *Paka* of *Shukra* and *Shonita* like the cream is formed after boiling the milk. The *Paka* of *Shukra* and *Shonita* is depending up on the *Ahara Rasa* taken by the mother. Hence the *Shukra Shonita Paka Kriyas* based on *Rasa*.

As the *Ankura (Beeja)* is considered as *Moola* for the formation of the *Shakha* (branches) of tree. Similarly, the *rasa* is considered as *Moola* which helps in development of succeeding *Dhatus*. So, *Shakha* includes 6 *Dhatus* and *Twak*. So, all the seven *Dhatus* are included in one path way as *Bahyarogamarga*.

As *Rasa* resides in *Twacha*, the *Rasa* word has not used in the *Shakha*. The *Twak* has been designated because any changes in the *Rasa* expressed in the skin.<sup>[18]</sup> Though *Rasa* is not directly mentioned in *Shakhagata Roga* site, as the *Rasa* residing in the *Twak* it is understood the involvement of *Rasa Dhatu* in *Shakhagatarogamarga*.

Acharya Charaka and Vagbhata consider *Rakta (Rudhira)* under *Bahyarogamarga*, *Shakha Raktadaya Twak*. But according to *Sushruta* while narrating term *Koshta*, he includes *Rudhira*<sup>[19]</sup> (*Rakta*) which is present in *Yakrut* and *Pleehadi Ashayas*, hence *Rudhira (Rakta)* and *Rudhiraashaya* are considered under *Koshta*.

### Relation of Dosas with Koshta Shakhadi Margas

*Aahara* gets metamorphosed into *Aahara Rasa*, *Dosha*, and *Kitta*. Normal diet has the potentially of producing *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Malas* in the body. So *Doshas* get originated in gut from the digested food material. Such portion is regarded as *Sara*. All three *Doshas* originated from *Aahara Rasa*.<sup>[20]</sup> *Doshas* produced in this way are essential for all the activities of the body. *Kapha Dosh* for building up tissues, *Pitta* for anabolic and catabolic conversations and *Vata* for impulsive and movements of all kinds.

These three functions take place all over the body even at the cellular and psycho-intellectual level. For the performance of all these functions *Doshas* must

pervade the whole body. For that *Doshas* are constantly passing from *Koshta* to *Shakhas* and from *Shakha* to *Koshta* according to the requirement. They enter the *Koshtas* to intake and digestion and return to the *Shakhas* when that function is over. This to and fro passage of *Doshas* takes place smoothly under normal physiological conditions. When *Doshas* get vitiated this smooth transit is hampered for many reasons. Among them mainly the vitiated *Doshas* produced pathological changes either structural or functional or both in *Dhatus* or *Shakhas* (*Srothovagunya*). Instead of freely moving between *Shakhas* and *Koshtas* *Doshas* stick on to the already vitiated *Srotases* (*Marga*/ channel). The entire process is called *Sthanasamsraya* of *Doshas* in *Dhatus*. Thus *Rogamargas* are very much related to *Samprapti* of a disease. After *Dosha* visitation how *Doshas* travel at different parts of the body through *Rogamarga*. This diversion of *Doshas* from physiological to pathological activity is known as *Shakhagati*.

#### Causes of transit of *Doshas* from *Koshta* to *Shakhas*

According to Acharya Charaka there are mainly four reasons<sup>[21]</sup> they are over exercise, due to effect of digestive fire, improper behavior and food habits, and increased activity of *Vata*. By these all causes *Doshas* are taken to the other *Rogamarga* from *Koshta*. *Vagbhata* has added *Asthi Marmani*, while Charaka only mentioned *Shakha*. Here, the *Shakha* word implies to both the *Rogamarga* (*Madhyama* and *Bahya*), because from *Koshta* it can go into both of these *Margas*.

#### *Shaakhaashrita Kamala*

The intake of rough, cold, heavy and sweet food, over exercise, suppression of natural urges vitiate *vata* which becomes powerful when mixed it with aggravated *Kapha*. This displaces *Pitta* from its own seat and brings about yellow discoloration to eye, urine and skin. The stools being deprived of colour of *Pitta* (yellow) become white. The shift of *Pitta* to blood circulation and *Pitta* being diminished in *Koshta*, Manifest *Shaakhaashrita Kamala*.<sup>[22]</sup>

#### Methods of correcting pathological development

The development of diseases means the transit of *Doshas* from *Koshta* to *Shakha*. Naturally the remedy will be either 1) To bring *Doshas* back to *Koshta* and remove them through the nearest available tract whenever possible or 2) Suppress them when removal is not suitable. The ideal remedy is the first one i.e., to bring *Doshas* into *Koshta* and Remove them.

#### *Chikitsa Shaakhashrita Kamala*

Acharya Charak explained five main measures<sup>[23]</sup> to bring *Dosha* from *Shakha* to *Koshta* they are *Srotomukha Visodhanat* (clearance of obstruction from *Srotas*), *Vridhi* (increase of vitiated *Doshas*), *Vhishyandan* and *Pakaat* (liquefaction of *Doshas* by the process of digestion), *Vayunigraha* (reduction in intensity of stimulation of *Vata Dosha*).

So main line of treatment for *Shaakhaashrita Kamala* needs special emphasis because *Malaranjaka Pitta* is situated in *Shakha*, therefore *Virechanadi Karma* will not be effective till *Doshas* are not brought to the *Koshta*. Acharya Charak mentioned<sup>[24]</sup> *Trikatu* because of its *Ushna*, *Teekshna* and *Laghuguna* makes *Pitta Vruddhi* in *Shakha*. *Maatulunga Swarasa* due to its *Amla Rasa*, *Amlavipaka Ushna Veerya* does *Vatashamana*. *Trikatu* due to its *Katurasa* and *Rookshaguna* does *Kapha Shamana*. So, *Pitta* returns to its own site. When *Doshas* comes to *Koshta* the same treatment is given as that of *Koshtashrita Kamala*. The clinical significance of knowledge of this *Gati* of *Doshas* in *Rogamarga* is in the formulation of treatment protocol.

#### CONCLUSION

*Roga Marga* is the actual path of the disease as it has got definite structure and diseases are grouped under a particular *Roga Marga*. Various movements of *Vikrita Doshas* towards *Dhatus* leading to genesis of diseases. If the *Doshas* attains different pathways and leaves their normal seats causes the manifestation of diseases. So, *Roga Marga* has got a crucial role in manifestation, pathogenesis and progress of diseases. The knowledge of *Trividha Rogamarga* is helpful for finding *Sadhya Asadhyata* of diseases. Hence, to

achieve over the disease, the physician need to assess the involvement of pathway and treat disease accordingly.

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