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# A review on analysis of *Dosha* predominance in patient of *Shotha* (oedema) with the help of *Rupa* (symptoms)

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## ABSTRACT

Principles of Ayurveda emphasise firstly on diagnosis of disease and then on the treatment. *Nidanpanchaka* helps for the diagnosis of disease. *Rupa* is one of the *Nidanpanchaka* which reflects the present status of disease along with the *Dosha* predominance and state of *Dosha* like *Ama* (unripe), *Pakwa* (ripe), etc. which helps in diagnosis and treatment as well. *Shotha* is explained in all the classical texts of Ayurveda which depicts its importance. It is one of the most common presentations seen in patients. With the analysis of symptoms present in patient of *Shotha*, we can ascertain the *Dosha* predominance and can plan the treatment accordingly. So, the present article focuses on to study the symptoms of *Shotha* to analyse the *Dosha* predominance in it.

**Key words:** *Shotha*, *Rupa*, *Oedema*, *Symptoms*, *Dosha* predominance.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has stated that a physician should first diagnose a disease and then select the proper medicine and thereafter should administer the therapy by applying knowledge of science of medicine.<sup>[1]</sup> Any disease can be diagnosed with the help of 5 entities called as *Nidanpanchak* which includes *Nidan*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashay*, *Samprapti*.<sup>[2,3,4]</sup> *Rupa* is one of the important tool for understanding the nature of disease. It is supposed to be the outcome of specific combination of *Dosha* and *Dushya*.<sup>[5]</sup> The presentation

of manifested disease along with peculiar *Dosha* predominance, state of *Dosha* like *Ama* (unripe) or *Pakwa* (ripe) can be understood with the help of *Rupa*.<sup>[6]</sup>

In *Nidan Sthan* of Charak Samhita, compendium of symptomatology has been provided as reckoner for the Ayurveda practitioners to gain adequate knowledge of some of major class of disease and diagnose them effectively.<sup>[7]</sup> The diseases which are not described in classical texts due to their various nature and classical presentation shall also be treated with the help of various factors out of which predominance of *Dosha* is the prime one.<sup>[8]</sup> So, the *Rupa* guides us for finding the nature of disease, *Dosha* predominance and indirectly helps for treatment as it is supposed to be opposite of *Dosha*, *Dushya* and *Nidanam*.<sup>[9]</sup>

All the classical texts of Ayurveda have explained the disease *Shotha*. Acharya Charaka has quoted it to be a major disease i.e., *Mahagada*.<sup>[10]</sup> It is a very common manifestation perhaps every individual come across once or more in their lifetime.<sup>[11]</sup> All *Shotha* are supposed to be due to *Rakta* and *Tridosha* vitiation.<sup>[12]</sup> But, from treatment point of view they are classified into 3 types i.e., *Vataj*, *Pittaj* and *Kaphaj*.<sup>[13]</sup> In patients

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presenting with *Shotha*, the particular symptoms helps us to find the *Dosha* predominance and guide us for treatment further.<sup>[14]</sup> So, the present article focusses on particular symptoms of *Shotha* for analysis of *Dosha* predominance.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the classical texts of Ayurveda i.e., *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hriday*, *Madhav Nidanam* along with their commentaries were studied. Apart from this research articles, books and websites were referred for the same topic.

### OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

The symptoms of *Vataj*, *Pittaja* and *Kaphaja Shotha* according to all classical texts are described in table below<sup>[15-20]</sup>

**Table 1: Symptoms of *Shotha* types.**

SN	Type of <i>Shotha</i>	Symptoms
1.	<i>Vataj Shotha</i>	<i>Shotha</i> increases as well as subsides quickly, <i>Shyam</i> (blackish) or <i>Aruna</i> (reddish) in colour, fleeting, pulsating, horripilation with thin, dry, coarse skin, rough and broken hair, the person feels different types of pain sensation like excision, incision, pricking, crawling of ants, irritation and a feeling of contraction or expansion, numbness and discomfort, swelling rebounds immediately after releasing pressure, increases during day time and subsides during night, by application of unctuous and hot massage and beating. Swelling is movable and often subsides without appreciable reason.
2.	<i>Pittaj Shotha</i>	Hot & soft with brown and copper hair, painful to touch, with specific odour, blackish, yellow, red or bluish copper tinged skin and has tendency of turning into abscess, accompanied with excessive burning sensation, fever, perspiration, giddiness, thirst, redness in eyes & intoxication, loose motion, craves for cold, increases and subsides quickly. Hot, sweaty, moist, sensitive to heat. Initiates in middle of body.

3.	<i>Kaphaj Shotha</i>	Grows slowly and subsides with difficulty. Affected part becomes pale, whitish, heavy, unctuous, sticky, smooth, stable thick with white hair, tolerant of touch and heat. Swelling is heavy and firm, immovable, unctuous, cold, associated with anaemia, anorexia, lowered digestion, water brash, vomiting and sleepiness. On pressing it takes long time to attain its normal position, increases at night time. If incised with the help of <i>Kusha</i> grass or <i>Shastra</i> then there is no letting out of blood and <i>Piccha</i> oozes lately, craves for hot touch.
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### DISCUSSION

Acharya Chakrapani stated that treatment can't be initiated without proper knowledge of disease.<sup>[21]</sup> The *Nidanpanchak* helps for the proper knowledge of disease hence known as *Pancha Dnyana Upaya* or *Vyadhibodhak*.<sup>[22]</sup> The symptoms which manifest after *Purvarupa* and clarify the *Dosha* predominance in *Vyadhi* e.g. *Vataj Jwara*, *Pittaj Jwara*, *Kaphaj Jwara*, etc., are known as *Rupa*.<sup>[23]</sup> Acharya Charaka has included *Shotha* under the category of *Mahagada*.<sup>[24]</sup> It is one of the most common presentation seen now a days. The understanding of *Dosha* predominance and guidance about treatment can be obtained with the help of *Rupa*. In patients of *Shotha* following points should be considered for analysis of *Dosha* predominance –

- Characteristics of *Shotha* underlying skin** - The morbid *Vata* obstructed by vitiated *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Rakta* aggravated at the site of peripheral superficial vessels reside at *Twak* and *Mamsa* leads to an elevation called *Shotha*.<sup>[25]</sup> So, the underlying skin gets the properties of respective vitiated *Dosha*.<sup>[26]</sup> e.g., in *Vataj Shotha* the underlying skin acquires the properties of vitiated *Vata* i.e., skin becomes thin, dry, coarse, rough with broken hair, blackish or red coloured. In *Pittaj Shotha* skin is blackish, yellow or red coloured, with brown and copper hair, hot, sweaty, moist, sensitive to touch and heat, with specific odour, craves for cold. In *Kaphaja Shotha*, the skin is pale, whitish, unctuous, smooth, thick with white hair, tolerant of heat and touch, craves for hot touch.

2. **Characteristics of Shotha** - The properties of vitiated *Dosha* reflect in *Shotha* characteristics. E.g., in *Vataj Shotha*, due to *Chala Guna* of *Vayu* the *Shotha* is mobile, appears and subsides quickly, is fleeting or pulsating, rebounds immediately after release of pressure, often subsides without appreciable reason.<sup>[27]</sup> In *Pittaj Shotha*, due to soft, hot, liquid property and *Vistra Gandha* of *Pitta* the *Shotha* is hot, soft in touch, with specific odour, increases and subsides quickly. In *Kaphaja Shotha*, due to heavy, steady property of *Kapha* the *Shotha* is heavy, firm or immobile, unctuous, grows slowly and subsides with difficulty and on pressing it takes long time to regain. If incised with the help of *Kusha* grass or *Shastra*, there is no letting of blood and *Lasika* oozes out lately.
3. **Diurnal variation** - The symptoms of disease vary as per different season, time of day and night, age, stage of digestion of food known as *Kal Samprapti*.<sup>[28-30]</sup> As there is dominance of *Vayu*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* at morning, mid-day and night respectively naturally. So, the symptoms of *Shotha* appear at that time of day particularly.<sup>[31]</sup> Acharya Chakrapani has stated that as the body channels are open, and the body is fully functioning. Hence, the *Vayu* dominates and not the *Kapha*. So, the *Vataj Shotha* appears at daytime and at the night time the body channels are obstructed by *Kleda* and body is not active functionally. So, the *Kapha* increases and hence, *Kaphaja Shotha* appears at night-time.<sup>[32]</sup>
4. **Upashaya and Anupshaya** - The medicine, diet and regimen that bring about relief either by acting directly on the cause of disease or the disease itself or by producing such effects indirectly are termed as *Upashaya*.<sup>[33-35]</sup> *Vataj Shotha* pacifies with the use of hot and unctuous substance and *Mardana* as they are opposite to the qualities of *Vata*.<sup>[17]</sup> Similarly, *Pittaj* and *Kaphajshotha* gets pacified by medicine, diet and regimen opposite of their qualities.
5. **Site of appearance** - The *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* dwell specially below umbilicus, between heart

and umbilicus and above heart respectively.<sup>[36]</sup> So, the *Pittaj Shotha* appears firstly in mid body.<sup>[16]</sup> The *Vataj* and *Kaphaj Shotha* might appear firstly in lower and upper body respectively.

6. **Associated symptoms** - As the obstruction of morbid *Vata* by vitiated *Kapha*, *Rakta* and *Pitta* occur at the site of peripheral superficial vessels.<sup>[37]</sup> So, it may be stated that *Dosha* travels the whole body through blood vessels which in turn lead to other systemic *Dosha* vitiation symptoms. So, the *Vataj Shotha* has various type of pain, numbness, horripilation. *Pittaj Shotha* has associated symptoms like burning sensation, fever, perspiration, giddiness, thirst, redness in eyes, intoxication, loose motion. *Kaphaj Shotha* is associated with anaemia, anorexia, reduced appetite, water brash, vomiting and sleepiness.<sup>[15-20]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

*Shotha* has been given immense importance by all the classical texts of Ayurveda. It is one of the most common presentations seen in patients. *Rupa* plays an important role in deciding *Dosha* predominance and thus guides for further treatment. In patients presenting with *Shotha*, characteristics of *Shotha* and underlying skin, diurnal variation, site of first appearance, aggravating and relieving factors and associated symptoms helps us to precisely reach upto particular *Dosha* vitiation and eases the treatment further.

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