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Concept of *Shukra Dhatu* with special reference to *Dhatu Sarata*

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ABSTRACT

As roots of tree are very important for maintenance, stability and growth similarly *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* (Three bio energies + seven body tissues + three wastes) are very important for maintaining human body. *Shukra Dhatu* is one of the seven *Dhatu*s in the body. According to them *Garbhotpadana* (reproduction) is chief function of *Shukra Dhatu*. *Shukra Dhatu* is one of *Pranayatana*s of *Sharira*. *Shukra Pramana* (Quantity) of *Shukra* in human body is half *anjali*. Well nourished *Dhatu*s give strength to maintain health and immunity. The strength of body and mind can be evaluated by *Dhatu Sarata*. *Dhatu Sarata* is qualitative, quantitative and functional assessment of *Dhatu*s. *Shukra Sara* person is known to possess unctuous (*Snigdha*), compact (*Samhat*) and white (*Shweta*) bones (*Asthi*), teeth (*Danta*), nails (*Nakha*), and has excessive sexual desire and children (*Bahula Kamapraja*).

Key words: *Shukra*, *Dhatu*, *Sarata*.

INTRODUCTION

Aim of the Ayurveda is to maintain the health of a healthy person and cure the diseased person. Health is defined by the equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala* and *Agni* and *Prasannata* of *Atma*, *Indriya* and *Mana*. As roots of tree are very important for maintenance, stability and growth similarly *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* (Three bio energies + seven body tissues + three wastes) are very important for maintaining human body.^[1] *Shukra Dhatu* is one of the seven *Dhatu*s in the body. Chief functions of seven *Dhatu* are

explained by *Acharya Vagbhata*. According to them *Garbhotpadana* (reproduction) is chief function of *Shukra Dhatu*.^[2] Ayurveda has explained the concept of '*Dasha Pranayatana*'. These are said to be vital area of the body where the '*Prana*' energy resides. *Shukra* is one of the '*Dash Pranayatana*'.

DHATU UTPATTI

The *Jathragni* causes splitting of all types of food ingredients into two fractions, viz., *Rasa* and *Mala* and *Bhutagnis* cause manifestation of the respective attributes specific to these *Mahabhutas* in the food ingredients.

Thereafter, by virtue of their respective seven categories of *Agnis*, *Dhatu*s, the sustainers of the body, undergo metabolic transformation in two different ways, viz. *Kitta-Paka* (transformation of waste products) and *Prasad Paka* (transformation of nourishing material).^[3]

The nutrient fraction of *Rasa* provides nourishment to *Rakta*, that of *Rakta* to *Mamsa*, that of *Mamsa* to *Medas*, that of *Medas* to *Asthi*, that of *Asthi* to *Majja*, and the nutrient fraction of *Majja* provides

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nourishment to *Shukra*. The *Garbha* is the product of nutrient fraction of *Shukra*.^[4]

Shukra Dhatu

Shukra is the terminal tissue element of the body, which is considered as the *Sara* (essence) of all other tissue elements. *Acharya* has elaborated the importance of the ultimate *Dhatu Shukra* as above, which is must for life and decrease in its quality or quantity may result into many ailments or even death. The specific function of *Shukra* is *Garbhodpadana* (reproduction-fertilization).^[5] *Shukra Dhatu* is one of *Pranayatanas* of *Sharira*.^[6] *Shukra Pramana* (Quantity) of *Shukra* in human body is half *Anjali*.^[7]

Sthana of Shukra Dhatu

The specialty of '*Shukra*' *Dhatu* is to diffuse all over the body, but it is not perceivable at every time like other *Dhatu*, only at the time of ejaculation, when it comes out from the body.

Ayurveda considers *Shukra* as located all over the body by its pervading nature just as the entire sugarcane is pervaded with its juice, the whole curd is contained with ghee, which is available on *Manthana* (churning), and oil is contained in all parts of the sesame seed, which can be extracted.^[8] The sugarcane juice, ghee and oil are not visible until the process of extraction. *Sushruta* also expressed the same opinion.

Synonyms

Shukra, *Retas* (semen), *Bala* (strength), *Beeja* (sperm), *Virya* (potency), *Majja Samudbhava* (derived from marrow), *Anandprabhava* (born out of pleasure), *Pumstavam* (manliness), *Indreeyam*, *Kittavarjitam* (contains no waste material), *Paurasham* (virility), *Pradhan Dhatu*, *Oja*, *Dhatu Sneha*, *Dhatu Saara*, *Utkrushta Dhatu*, *Bhrugu*, *Bhargava*, *Teja* (Resplendent), *Annavikara*, *Majja Rasa* (essence of marrow), *Rohana*, *Rupadrava* etc. are synonyms of *Shukra*.

Panchabhoutik composition of Shukra

Shukra is composed of four proto elements. In the explanation regarding this, preceptor *Atreya* states

that *Shukra* is made of *Vayu*, *Agni*, *Prithvi* and *Ambu* in the state of their excellence. While commenting on the above lines *Chakrapani* clarifies that *Akasha* is also no doubt present in *Shukra* in view of its pervasive nature, but as it doesn't move together with other four *Mahabhutas* present in *Shukra* in the course of ejaculation, it is not considered to be a distinct factor responsible for the composition of *Shukra*.^[9]

Acharya Sushruta states that *Shukra* is *Saumya* which has originated from *Jala Mahabhuta Bhumi*, *Jala*, *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Akash* perform the functions *Dharana* (base), *Samhanana* (binding), *Parinama* (metamorphosis), *Vyoooha* (blow) and *Avakash* (spatial provision) respectively.^[10]

Quantity of Shukra

Quantity of the *Shukra Dhatu* is *Ardha* (½) *Anjali* in human body as per *Acharya Charaka*, but *Acharya Bhela* stated that quantity of *Shukra* is *Eka* (1) *Anjali*.^[7]

Shukra Utpaadak Avyava

1. Shukravaha Srotas (Channels of metamorphosis of Shukra)

Regarding the *Moola* (site of origin), different *Acharyas* are having varied opinions of *Shukravahasrotas*.

- According to *Acharya Charak*, *Vrishana* (testicles) and *Sepha* (penis).^[11]
- According to *Acharya Sushrut*, *Vrishana* (testicles) and *Stana* (breasts).^[12]
- According to *Acharya Vagbhatt*, *Mushka* (testicles), *Stana* (breasts), and *Majja* (bone marrow).^[13]

2. Shukradhara Kala

Shukradhara (semen bearing) *Kala* is the last and seventh one among *Kalas*, which extends of throughout the entire body of all living creatures.^[14]

The *Shukra Dhatu* formed by the evolutionary metamorphosis of *Shukra* pervades all over the body in the *Shukradhara Kala*. *Shukradhara Kala* performs the following functions.

1. Abode for the pervading *Shukra Dhatu*. It holds and provides the abode for performing the whole body (*Sarvadaihika*) functions of *Shukra*.
2. Helps further to expel (*Sanchit*) *Shukra Dhatu* during *Samagama*.

Apart from these, *Acharyas* have given references of the two pairs of *Shukravaha Dhamani*, *Shukravaha Sira*, *Sepha Sevani*.

Guna (physical characteristics) of Shukra

The unmanifested soul is represented in the body as *Shukra* and the physical character of it is beyond sensory perception. Physical properties of ejaculated part of *Shukra* have been presented in a tabular form below;

Physical properties of Shukra / Characteristics^{[15], [16], [17]}

Table 1: Characters of Shukra Dhatu

Characte rs	Charaka	Sushrut	Astanga Samgraha	Astanga Hridaya
Varna (Colour)	Shukla (white)	Taila Nibham, Kshoudranibham (resembling oil or honey)	Shukla, Ghrita Taila Kshaudra Anyatama Varna (resembling ghee, oil or honey etc.)	Shukla, Ghrita Makshika Tailabham (resembling ghee, honey or oil)
Rasa (Taste)	Madhur (Sweet)	Madhur (Sweet)	Madhur (Sweet)	Madhur (Sweet)
Gandha (Smell)	Avisram (not having bad odour)	Madhugandhi (smell of honey)	Madhugandhi	
Rupa (Consistency)	Bahala, Snigdha, Guru, Picchila, Bahu, Ghana, Sphatika Sannibham	Drava, Snigdham, Sphatikabham	Soumya, Snigdham, Guru, Picchila, Bahu, Bahalam	Guru, Snigdham, Bahalam, Bahu

Others	Avidahi Non-irritating			
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Concept of Dhatu Sarata

Human physiology depends on balanced state of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* (tissues) and *Mala* (waste materials). Among these, *Dhatu*s can be called as stabilizing pillars of the body. Well nourished *Dhatu*s give strength to maintain health and immunity. The strength of body and mind can be evaluated by *Dhatu sarata*, which has been specified in *Charaka Samhita Viman Sthana* 8th chapter while explaining *Dashavidha Pariksha* (tenfold examination). *Dhatu Sarata* is qualitative, quantitative and functional assessment of *Dhatu*s.

Nirukti of Dhatu Sarata

The term '*Sara*' is derived from the root '*Sru Sthire*' with suffix '*Ghan*'. It means essential, best, highest, most excellent, real, true, genuine, strong, and vigorous. It is also considered as the '*Bala*'.

The concept of *Sara* is related with the excellence of *Dhatu*. However, the body of every individual is made up of seven *Dhatu*, it is found that at the level of the excellence of *Dhatu*'s in each individual differs from another.

Shukra Sara

Gentleness (*Soumya*), gentle look (*Soumyaprekshina*), milky white sclera (*Kshirpurna Netra*), good sexual capacity (*Praharshabahula*), unctuous (*Snigdha*), round (*Vritta*), firm (*Sara*), even (*Sama*) and compact (*Samhat*) teeth (*Danta*) and their teeth resemble like Arabian jasmine (*Shikhar Danta*), have pleasant and unctuous complexion and voice (*Prasanna Snigdha Varna Swara*), these people are lustrous (*Bhrajishnu*) and have prominence of gluteus region (*Mahasphik*). This *Shukra Sarata* gives liking by women (*Stripriyatva*), they enjoy intercourse (*Stri Upabhogitva*) and have strength (*Balawanta*), happiness (*Sukhabhaj*), sovereignty (*Aishwaryabhaj*), health (*Aarogyabhaj*), wealth (*Vittabhaj*), respect (*Sammanbhaj*) and good progeny (*Apatyabhaj*).^[18]

Shukra Sara person is known to possess unctuous (*Snigdha*), compact (*Samhat*) and white (*Shweta*) bones (*Asthi*), teeth (*Danta*), nails (*Nakha*), and has excessive sexual desire and children (*Bahula Kamapraja*).^[19]

CONCLUSION

Shukra Dhatu is produced from *Aahara Rasa* through *Majjadhatu*, it is *Soumya* or *Jala Mahabhuta Pradhana*. *Shukra* is situated in entire body. According to them *Garbhotpadana* (reproduction) is chief function of *Shukra Dhatu*. Quantity of the *Shukra Dhatu* is *Ardha* ($\frac{1}{2}$) *Anjali* in human body as per *Acharya Charaka*, but *Acharya Bhela* stated that quantity of *Shukra* is *Eka* (1) *Anjali*. The *Shukra Sara Lakshanas* mentioned in the classics *Shukra Sara* person is known to possess unctuous (*Snigdha*), compact (*Samhat*) and white (*Shweta*), bones (*Asthi*), teeth (*Danta*), nails (*Nakha*) and has excessive sexual desire and children (*Bahula kamapraja*).

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