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CONCEPT OF JANAPADODHWAMSA WSR TO AYURVEDA

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Abstract

Ayurvedic Acharyas have clearly defined concept of Epidemic in their texts. Acharya Charaka had covered the concept of epidemic in detail under the heading of Janapadodhwamsa. Such diseases have similar signs, symptoms and affect many people of that place at a time and has potential to destroy the whole town. Factors which are common to the community like air (Vayu), water (Jala), habitat (Desha) and seasons (Kala) are responsible for Janapadodhwamsa. Interactions among agent, host and environment is responsible for emergence of infectious diseases. An infection is manifested only if agent is able to overcome the host immunity under favourable environment. Ayurveda advocates various preventive measures like avoiding Prasanga (mutual contact) and Gatrasansparsha (touching) to break the chain of transmission of infective agents and Rasayana (rejuvenative therapy) and Panchakarma (purification procedures) to promote the health. There are many practices advised by Acharyas to prevent infectious diseases like daily regimens, seasonal regimens, personal hygiene, environmental hygiene, dietary guidelines, immunity boosting measures which are relevant even today.

Key-words: Janapadodhwamsa, Ayurveda, Panchakarma, Epidemic, Disease, Health

Introduction

A pandemic is defined as the worldwide spread of a new illness or a disease that has spread over a significant region, crossing international borders and impacting a huge number of people. Even if medical research has advanced tremendously in recent years, the value of old ways of illness prevention cannot be overlooked in the twenty-first century.^[1] Many infectious illnesses, such as TB, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, and others, may now be controlled with vaccination and antibiotic treatment, but this is not the case when a new pathogen emerges. The COVID-19 pandemic (corona virus disease -19) is a recent example in this regard, which has resulted in a huge number of deaths globally.

The subject of pandemic is addressed by Acharya Charaka in Janapadodhwansa chapter of Vimanasthana, which dates back centuries before the common period.^[2] Janapadodhwamsa is a combination of the terms Janapada and Udhvamsa. Janpada denotes a nation or a significant human habitation, whereas Udhvamsa denotes being afflicted or destroyed. Pandemic outbreaks of illnesses, as well as their symptoms, are mostly caused by four common reasons. The therapy methods are also widely used in the community. Pandemics are treated with both medicinal and non-medicinal treatments that are still effective and applicable today. Pragyapradha is the major cause of fatal Janapadodhwamsa (pandemic) and other ailments, according to Ayurvedic texts. It signifies that when Adharma grows and people continue to do bad things despite understanding the repercussions, sickness will result.

In the Sushruta Samhita, communicable illnesses are transferred by Gaatrasparshan (physical contact), Niswasa (inhalation), Sahbhajanata (dining together), Sahashayyanat (sitting and sleeping together), and Vastramalyanulepanat (sitting and sleeping together) (by contact with clothes, garlands etc).^[3] Kushtha, Jwara, Shosha, and Netraabhisayand are examples of transmissible illnesses that may pass from one person to another, according to Sushruta. The classical book listed different illnesses affecting the respiratory system as pandemics, with symptoms such as fever, cough, breathing trouble, rhinorrhea, and headache. The causal agent of such ailments enters the human body through the nasal passages, according to Dalhana, the text's commentator. As a result, the modes of infection outlined above play a significant part in the transmission of a disease to all people.

Medicinal and non-medicinal methods can be used to combat the pandemic epidemic. Panchkarma (purification therapy) and Rasayana (rejuvenation therapy) are examples of medicinal procedures.^[4] The basic thought is to enhance the immunity to fight a pandemic with the medicinal measures. Non medicinal measures are Achararasayan. Avoidance of spreading factors can be understood as social distancing in present time.

Causes of epidemic

The vitiation of Vayu, Jala, Desh, and Kala causes Janapadodhwamsa.^[5] This idea is comparable to environmental pollution or specific types of pollution such as air pollution and water contamination. Environmental contamination plays an undeniable impact in the development of human illness. Despite significant attempts to clean up the environment in recent years, pollution has remained a serious concern and continues to pose health dangers. Traditional sources of pollution, such as industrial emissions, poor sanitation, inadequate waste management, polluted water supplies, and exposure to indoor air pollution from biomass fuels, harm huge numbers of people in the developing countries. Environmental contamination, however, occurs even in wealthy countries, particularly among the lower elements of society.^[6,7] Pollution is responsible for 8–9% of the total illness burden, although it is much higher in poor nations.

Characteristics of Dushit Vayu, Jala, Desha and Kala^[8,9]

Vayu(Air)– Vishama(absence of features in accordance with season), Atistimita(excessive calm), Atichalam(excessive violent), Atiparusha(excessive rough), Atishita(extreme cold), Atyushna (extreme hot), Atiruksha(excessive dry), Atyabhishtyandi(excessive humid), Atibhairavaravam(wind blowing with excessive sound), Asatmaygandhavash pasiktapanshudhum ophatamiti (wind with unwholesome smell, mixed with gases, sand, ashes and smoke).

Jala(Water) – Vikrutgandhavarnarasasparsa (Abnormal smell, colour, taste and touch), Kledabahula(excessive stickiness), Jalcharavihangam (water bodies is devoid of aquatic animals like fishes etc.), Apritikaram(unpleasant appearance or taste), Upgatagunam(devoid of natural qualities), etc.

Desha(Land) – Vikrutgandhavarnarasasparsa (Abnormal smell, colour, taste and touch), Kledabahula (excessive stickiness), abundance of serpents, wild animals, mosquitos, locusts, flies, rats; Pratanaadibahulam (excessive orchard with grass, weeds and creepers), Atishukshanastashasyam (extremely dried land with destroyed crops), Dhumrapawanam (abundance of smoke in air), Suffering of different animals and birds due due to bewilderment and agony, Kshubhitudirnajalashayam(disturbed and turbulent water bodies), etc.

Kala- features opposite, excessive or less to the features of normal course of season.

Ayurveda advocates a healthy lifestyle centred on an individual's particular mind-body type, as well as strategies to self-referral. Self-referral entails being acutely aware of one's own body, behaviours, and relationships to others and the world. It teaches how to live instinctively and in accordance with the principles of nature in order to achieve optimal health and progress. Because it is all about tuning in to one's natural intelligence that drives our every habit and action, the knowledge of Ayurveda plays a supportive role in wellness. Ayurvedic Medicine is not just a method for maintaining one's health, but it is also concerned with the health of the world and the animals that live in the fragile ecosphere. It's about profound connectivity with everything, including plants, seasons, day-night cycles, and all creatures that live on the planet, all of which work together to maintain a healthy ecosystem. This epidemic provides us with a chance to examine every element of our lives, behaviours, and interconnectedness.^[10]

Charaka Samhita texts say that during the time of an epidemic, it is a time to go within oneself. It is recommended to follow the Ayurvedic daily routine to increase immunity which includes the following suggestions:^[11]

- Drinking hot water upon waking in the morning, and then tea during the day with cardamom, cinnamon, and tulsi (holy basil) to keep the digestion ability strong.
- Avoid any cold foods and drinks which dampen digestive ability and clog the system
- Practice breathing techniques called pranayama to strengthen the respiratory system.
- Do Yoga and Suryanamaskar (sun salutations) to create physical strength, practice meditation to reduce stress

- Eat healthy, warm, and easy to digest food such as mung dahl, basmati rice, vegetables cooked with digestive spices of cumin, coriander, fennel, and ginger.

Panchakarma, or purifying treatments such as Vamana (emesis), Virechana (purgation), Basti (medicated enema), and Nasya (taking medications through the nasal channel), rasayana, and adhering to the sadavritta might help to avoid and control Janapadodhwansa (code of conduct).^[12] One should undergo regular Ritushodhana (bio purification procedures) which are mentioned in classics in order to maintain proper nourishment of Dhathu, healthiness of Dosha, proper evacuation of Mala from the body according to respective Ritus. A patient with Jwara (fever) should drink warm water, as well as Langhana (fasting in various forms), Langhana-pachana (using herbs to induce lightness and digest Ama (undigested food), and Doshawasechana (purification procedures like vamana).^[13]

One should undergo regular Ritushodhana (bio purification procedures) which are mentioned in classics in order to maintain proper nourishment of Dhatu, healthiness of Dosha, proper evacuation of Mala from the body according to respective Ritus. In Vasantaritu, evacuative measures, such as Vamana and Nasya are advised along with Kavala (gargle), Dhooma (smoking), Anjana (collyrium). In Varsha Ritushodhana- Medicated Basti (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated Doshas. During Sharad rituShodhana, medical procedures, such as Virechana (purging), Rakta-Mokshana (bloodletting), etc., should be done. Ritushodhana will help in eradicating wastes in our body and keeps the body healthy.^[14]

Discussion

Janapadodhwansa refers to the affliction of a large number of individuals in a region by a disease that is likely to be contagious and communicable. The disorders that lead to Janapadodhwansa are attributed to contamination of Vayu (air), Jala (water), Desha (place or soil), and variations in Kala (season). Aupasargikaroga is a term used by Sushruta to describe diseases that spread from one man to another, such as Kushtha (skin ailments), Jwara (fever), Shosha (emaciation), and Netrabhishyanda (conjunctivitis). Prasanga (mutual contact), Gatrasansparsha (skin to skin contact), Nihashwasa (exhaled air),

Sahabhajana (meal sharing), Sahashaiya (sleeping near), Asana (sitting close to each other) are some of the several modalities of transmission.^[15]

Diseases are caused by the interaction of the agent, the host, and the environment. The goal of prevention is to eliminate or prevent the transmission of the causative agent, promote and preserve the health of the human host, and alter the internal and external environment to make it inappropriate for the agents. Healthy lifestyles such as Dinacharya (day regimen), Ratricharya (night regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), Sadvritta (excellent conduct), and Achararasayana (motivated ethical actions) are among the most basic preventative strategies in Ayurveda. Proper eating habits, such as Ashta-Vidha Ahara-visheshayatana, Naimittika Rasayana (rejuvenation treatment for particular condition), and age-specific Rasayana, are the most important preventative strategies.^[16] Secondary prevention is accomplished by Nidanaparivarjana (avoiding etiological variables) and various treatments such as Samtarpana and Atparpana, as well as avoiding different ways of Aupasargikaroga transmission.

Conclusion

Pandemics are not a new occurrence in human history. From the Athens epidemic until the present, there have been at least 50 significant pandemic disasters. Natural disasters, such as epidemics and pandemic illnesses, are classified as Janapadodhwamsa in Ayurveda. Preventing Janapadodhwamsa by avoiding Prajnaparadha and maintaining good Ritucharya can help to sustain society's health.

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