

DISEASES DUE TO DEFICIENCIES OF VITAL PRINCIPLES IN THE BODY

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According to the view of Ancient Indian Medicine, the diseases have been classified in two ways: Diseases due to deficiency and diseases due to excessive nutrition, i.e. *meda roga* and (*madhu: mehas*) diabetes mellitus etc. The former contains a larger list than the latter. The body is comprised of, three vital *doṣas*, seven *dhātus*, thirteen *agnis* and three *malas*. All these are the vital substances comparable to six essentials of nutrition, told in modern Physiology. The deficiency of any of the above described things may lead to generalised or specialized diseases as the case may be.

The present article deals with the diseases caused by the essential deficiencies in particular. When we talk of such diseases, our mind is influenced by the modern knowledge of diseases due to deficiencies, especially vitamin deficiency, but it is not out of place to say here that the whole of the Āyurvedic Medicine is based on deficiency and or excess of *dosa dhātu* and *mala*.

Somehow, deficiencies of vital principles were known to ancient *Ācāryas*. According to Āyurveda, vital principles are *doṣa*, *dhātu*, *mala*, *agni*.

Caraka has described details about the *āhāra* and its eight *āyatanāni*. The same thing came in the knowledge of modern scientist as late as in 1853, Nicolai Ivanevitch when he said that all natural diets contain unknown factors. He fed mice on an artificial mixture of the constituents of the milk and found that mice did not survive. He concluded that a natural food such as milk must also contain small quantities of unknown substances which are necessary for life. These were the hypothesis of modern workers, to know something about the deficiencies.

The deep insight of the ancient Indian workers in these lines says their ideas about the deficiencies^{3,4}. Keeping the *vāta*, *pitta*, *kapha* and *rasa*, *rakta*, *māṃsu*, *meda*, *asthi*, *majjā* and *sūkra* in balance is the motive of science of Āyurveda. It means to increase the lost *dhātu*: or tissue by suitable *āhāra*, *bihāra* and medications and it has been said that this is the duty of a *vaidya* to keep the *doṣa*, *dhātu* and *mala* in balanced positions.

Further *ācāryas* have told in the same context that there is protein deficiency, in *rājayakṣmā*⁵, and that can be recovered by giving meat.

There it has been described by the name of *hitāhāra* and *ahitāhāra*, i.e. suitable and unsuitable diets, one which is balanced diet that produces vitality in man and which is unbalanced, produces deficiency in human body. On the basis of this, different types of diets have been prescribed in different seasons. Now the problem is that there are persons who are taking cent per cent balanced diet but still not thriving. The answer has been given, that one who knows details about the *guṇa*, *dravya*, *karma* and *mātrā*, i.e. qualities, contents of material, action and quantity and dose, is the real authorised physician to prescribe the diet.

Under diseases two groups by the name of *santarpana-janya* and *aptarpana-janyavyādhis* are known. *Santarpana janya* means diseases due to excessive nutrition, e.g. *meda roga* or obesity, *madhumeha* or diabetes mellitus and the diseases of *hrdaya*, *yakṣita* and impotency are also produced. Here the *aptarpana-janya* means deficiency diseases which are *śoṣa*, fever, cough, emaciation neuritis. In such cases for the recovery, *sattu*, *madira*, *khaṇḍa*, ghee, *dahi*, fruits have been prescribed in medieval period. Some minerals were also added. The well recognised deficiency disease of children is *phakka roga*⁶. A child who is unable to walk after one year of his life is supposed to suffer from *phakka roga* which is known as ricket, due to vit. D. deficiency. It was included in clinical entity in 1645 by Daniel Whistler. The same is mentioned in Āyurvedic medicine and its cause is due to *kṣīṇu doṣa*. In the medieval period, Vāgbhaṭa has described the following 18 types of *kṣaya* or deficiency (1) *vāta kṣaya*, (2) *pitta kṣaya*, (3) *kapha kṣaya*, (4) *rasa*, (5) *rakta*, (6) *māṃsa*, (7) *meda*, (8) *asthi*, (9) *majjā*, (10) *śukra*, (11) *purīṣa*, (12) *mūtra*, (13) *sveda*, (14), (15), (16), 1(7), *malas* of *netra*, *karṇa*, *mukha* and *nāsikā*, (18) *ojas kṣaya*. These are the vital principles of the body. Deficiency of any one of these leads to certain signs and symptoms. Details of the signs and symptoms of *kṣaya* are as follows :

1. *Vāta kṣaya* : Lethargy and general depression in the activities.
2. *Pitta* ,, : *Mandāgni* (anorexia), sensation of cold.
3. *Kapha* ,, : Lethargy, Looseness of the joints.
4. *Rasa* ,, : Dryness in the body, loss of *dhātu*.
5. *Raktu* ,, : Hardness, cracking and dryness of the skin.
6. *Māṃsa* ,, : Pain in joints, lack of concentration.
7. *Meda* ,, : Spleenomegaly, pain in joints.
8. *Asthi* ,, : Pain in bones, falling of hair, nails and teeth.
9. *Majjā* ,, : Dizziness and darkness and some sort of aplastic anaemia.

10. *Śukra kṣaya* : Pain in testicles, delayed and scanty ejaculation and impotency.
11. *Purīṣa* ,, : Gargling sound going upwards causing pressure and pain in chest.
12. *Mūtra* ,, : Dysuria, burning micturition, haematuria.
13. *Sveda* ,, : Hardness and falling of hair follicles, cracking of the skin.
- 14, 15, 16, 17 *kṣaya* of *mala* of *netra*, *nāsikā*, *karṇa* and *mukha*, eyes, nose, ear and mouth —*malas* are insufficient and if it gets dried up there, causes pain and short of hearing and vision.
18. *Ojas* ,, : Emotional disturbances with loss of concentration. Psychological cry caused due to unknown fears.

The ancient *ācāryas* have described, keeping in view the above mentioned deficiencies signs and symptoms, a balanced diet⁷ consisting of all the essentials which is very well comparable with the diet prescribed in the modern age. The list is given below :

1. <i>Saṣṭikā Śālicāvala</i> (rice, madhu, java, honey and barley)	Different carbohydrates.
2. <i>Mudāga</i> (Pulse)	Protein
3. <i>Dugdha, ghr̥ta</i> (milk and ghee)	Fat
4. <i>Saindhava</i> (common salt)	Salt
5. <i>Āmalaki</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>)	Vitamin
6. <i>Āntarikṣa jala</i> (deep rain water)	Soft pyrogen free water.

The idea behind this was to keep the person healthy and to cure the diseased persons by providing balanced diet.

Herbals were used in ancient days for *Rasāyana* (rejuvenation) which was a therapy for all kinds of deficiency in human being. The use of *moti* (pearl) and other metals was considered for treatment. In this period the demand of sex stimulant was too much and the intake of *bhāṅg*, *akarkara*, *oṣadhi*, *modaka* etc. is found in *Sārṅgadhara Saṃhitā*.

In this period the importance of urine examination in the form *tel bindu* and stool examination was realised to know the deficiency or excess of a *doṣa*. These were done by naked eye.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Doṣas kṣīṇa dṛghayutabya pupītaḥ praśamayītabyah I
Vṛdha nirhartbyah samah paripālya iti Sidhnāth 11
- ² Sarnadoṣāḥ samāgniśca samadhātu malakriyāḥ I
Prasannātmendriya-maṇḥ swasthya itibhidhiyata 11
S. S. 16/41.
- ³ Sarbadā sarvābhāvānāma sāmāyanm vridhi kāranam,
Hwarhhetu-viśeṣaścha prabṛttirubhayastu.
C. C. 1/47.
- ⁴ Nunanāndhātun pūryāmah, vyatiriktān hrasāyaman.
C. S. 10/6
- ⁵ Dadyādmānsāni brihāni viśeṣataḥ.
C. C. 8/149.
- ⁶ "Bālah sanvatsarā (pannah) pādābhyām yo no gakṣati,
Sa phakwa iti vigyeshtasya tasya vakṣami lakṣanam.
- ⁷ Swāsthyasya swāsthya rakṣanamāturasya vikāraprasamanemch

C/S 30/24.