A REVIEW ARTICLE ON DEERGHAYU

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ABSTRACT

The word Ayurveda comes from the Sanskrit root “Ayu” which means span of life¹. Healthy long life is a result of continued good living with proper conditioning of body and mind. Deerghayu of an individual can be assessed based on certain characteristic features which is explained in Samhitas. Deerghayu can be assessed based on prakruti and also in relation with dhauhrida avastha in Garbha. Aacharya’s has explained detailed description regarding the Ayu Pareeksha with appropriate pramana for different anga pratyanga is mentioned. Entire Indriyasthana of Charaka Samhita has mentioned about the residual span of life of a diseased person. The present study is to analyse the characteristic features of dheerghayu and its probable reasoning.

Keywords: Ayu, dheerghayu, AyuPareeksha.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurveda the term “Ayu” stands for combination of body, mind, and soul². Ayu supports the body by preventing it from putrefaction and is called “Dhaarit². It give life, retains Prana and is called “Jeevitham². Though life is lived from moment to moment, there is a continuity in this whole process. So it is called “Nityaga². It connects the para and apara shareera thus Ayu is named as “Anubandha². Deerghayu should not only be evaluated by the number of years a person survived but also by the quality of life one had in all those surviving years. Ayurvedic text describes how to attain deerghayu and also mentioned certain signs and symptoms to decide the lifespan of a
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person. Ayu is classified broadly by Acharya Sushruta. Before prescribing any therapeutic procedure physician should examine lifespan of a patient by the examination which is explained in classical texts.

ASSESSMENT OF DEERGHAYU

The following criteria are useful to assess the long life span of the individual and based on that the patient should be treated with all efforts. One who possess bigger pani, Pada, Parshva, Prishta, Sthanagra (apex of breast), Dashana, Vadana (face), Skantha (shoulders), Lalaata, longer angaliparwa-phalanges, Uchwasa, Aksha, Bahu (hands), broader bhru, space in between sthana and urus, shorter janga (legs), Medra (penis), Greeva (neck), Gambheera satvta (mind), Swara, Nabhi, Slightly raised and compact Sthana, whose karna and back of the head are well grown, body drying first from the head after bath & anointing, and the regions of the heart later on will have long life span.

One who process deep located bony joints, veins, ligaments, well-developed body, steady sense organs each succeeding division of the body better than its preceeding, who is free from diseases since intra-uterine life and develops gradually with physical and mental qualities will have long life span.

DHEERGHAYU IN RELATION WITH PRAKRUTI AND GARBHA:

Prakruti (constitution) plays a important role in the proper estimation of span of life, in which qualities mentioned for Kapha Prakruti is endowed with the excellence of strength, wealth, knowledge, energy, peace and longevity.

The child born by proper Vyavaya kala (suitable day for copulation) will be having long life, wealth and strength. In Dauhrida avastha (women posses two heart) in pregnant women, who get her desires fulfilled, she give birth to a son who will be valiant and long lived.

PAREEKSHA’S FOR ASSESSMENT OF AYU

Before prescribing any therapeutic procedure, physician should examine lifespan of the patient and if they have residual lifespan then his Vyadhi (disease), Ritu (season), Agni (digestive Power), Vaya (age), Deha (body built), Bala (strength), Satwa (mental strength), Satmya (suitability),
Prakruti (constitution), Bheshaja (drug) and Desha (habitat) should be examined\(^9\).

Dashavidha Pareeksha (tenfold of examination) for the assessment of Ayu are explained, they are Prakruti (constitution), Víkṛuti (morbidity), Sara (excellence of Dáthu’s), Samhanana (compactness of body), Pramana (measurement of bodily organs), Satmya (suitability), Satwa (mental strength), Ahara shakti (power of intake and digestion of food), Vyayama shakti (power of performing exercise) and Vaya (estimation of age)\(^10\).

In Charaka Samhita, Shareera sthana, Jaata sutriya Adhyaya, it is explained that after performing the rites for giving a name to the child, one should examine the child to ascertain the span of life. It is examined by the characteristic features which is mentioned for each body parts of the child\(^11\).

**DISCUSSION**

In Ayurveda, the description about the deerghayu is less, but the Pareeksha’s( examinations) for the assessment of Ayu is explained elaborately.

The child born in proper "Vyavaaya Kala" will be having deerghayu, because in proper Vyavaaya Kala the endometrium prepares itself for the process of fertilization by increasing its thickness and thus provides proper nourishment and oxygen to the embryo which leads to the healthy development of foetus mentally and physically.

In dauhrida avastha (women posses two heart), in pregnant women, who get her desires fulfilled, she gives birth to a son who will be having deerghayu, it is because the pregnant women craving towards certain food items are rich in nutritive compounds which is helpful in proper growth of the foetus and thus the child will be free from diseases.

Acharya’s has explained that the “Kapha Prakruti” person is endowed with deerghayu because while explaining the characteristic features of Kapha Prakruti person, Acharya explained the term “balavāri”. Here bala is consider as immunity and because of good immunity the kapha prakruti person will not be affected with diseases easily.

Pramana is the criteria to measure the stature and dimension of the body parts and the person with normal pramana is considered to have deerghayu,
because proper *pramana* is an important factor for the normal growth and functioning of the body. eg; if knee joint has *samapramana*, then the person can withstand wear and tear similarly for short stature person if they don’t have *samapramana* for chest circumference, they may die because of respiratory disorders and thus the individual with normal *pramana* will be long lived.

*Acharya’s* has explained various features for *deerghayu* person such as "*Mahalalaatta*” is mentioned because the person may be having more IQ and the person will be more intelligent which may be contributed by frontal lobe, situated in the anterior cranial fossa. Thus there may be a chance of increase in size of skull bones according to the brain volume. "*Deerga uchwaasa*” is mentioned because the person will be having increased lung volume and have sufficient oxygen supply to the cells of entire body which make them immune to certain respiratory conditions.

**CONCLUSION**

*Deerghayu* is not only the quantity of life a person lived but also measures the quality of life a person lived in his surviving years. *Prakruti* helps to determine the general built and characteristic features of an individual which is important in detecting *vyadhi* and predicting prognosis of a disease in addition to plan the treatment accordingly. By the help of *Ayu pareeksha* explained in Ayurveda, before prescribing any medicine, physician should examine the span of life of healthy as well as the diseased person to get a better results for the treatment.

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