

CONCEPT OF SARA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RAKTASARA

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ABSTRACT

The saara is considered to be an important concept of Ayurveda because it reflects the overall health and well-being of an individual. Sara is one Among dashavidha pareeksha which is done to understand lifespan of an individual, degree of strength possessed by a person and to rule out morbidity. It is obvious that the views of ancient acharyas about the detection of status of rakta, directly in the person were very specific. They mentioned the organ specifically, the akshi, jihva, mukha, oshta, talu, panitala and padatala in the physical examination of rakta sara. Most of the rakta saara lakshanas in the body depends on the complexion of the skin. The knowledge of Saara of a person will help in understanding physiology, psychology and susceptibility to diseases of an individual. A healthy Rakta Sara is essential for maintaining physical and mental vitality.

KEYWORDS: Rakta sara, Rakta Dhatu, Rakta sara purusha, Ayurveda.**INTRODUCTION**

In Ayurveda the term sara has been described to denote the essence of dhatu with an excellent quality. The term sara is derived from the root 'sre sthire' meaning essential, best, most, real, genuine, vigorous.^[1] Maintenance of the equilibrium of the dhatus is the very object of the science of life, if sara is considered as the genetic constitution of dhatu, sahaja bala of specific dhatu will be increased as per his sara. Sara is considered as the excellent state in the functional aspect of dhatus. According to the descriptions in Samhithas and Nighantus, sara is related to bala.^[2] Though they appear to have resemblance they are different entities and it can be said that sara is a major parameter for assessment of bala. By sara pareeksha, one can assess the strength of the dhatus and mind of an individual. Thus the sara pariksha of an individual according to the excellence is recommended.^[3]

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Saara is defined as the excellency of that Dhatu. Characteristics of Saara is an index to measure the Bala of individual Dhatu. Since the Bala of individual Dhatu collectively provides Bala of Sharira. Saara is described as eight kind of relation with Rasadi Saptha Dhatus. Each succeeding one is better than its previous one and helpful in determining the degree of strength. A physician should not decide strength of a weak and strong person merely by their appearance. The person who is having all types of Saara, will be strong.^[4]

SAARATA

Concept of Saara is related only with Dhatu and not with Upadhatu and Mala.

Classifications

Each succeeding one better than its preceding one and helpful in determining the strength of the body. Hence, individuals on the basis of Sara, have been classified into various categories depending upon the predominance of particular Dhatu in the body, except the Sattva Sara which is based on the preponderance of Sattva (psychic factor) in the body.^[5] To determine the specific measure of strength sara is classified into 8 groups.

The sara sequence can be enumerated as follows

CARAKA SAMHITA	SUSRUTHA SAMHITA	ASTANGA HRIDAYA
1.Tvak sara	1.Sattva sara	1.Tvak sara
2.Rakta sara	2.Sukra sara	2.Rakta sara
3.Mamsa sara	3.Majja sara	3.Mamsa sara
4.Medas sara	4.Asthi sara	4.Medas sara
5.Asthi sara	5.Medha sara	5.Asthi sara
6.Majja sara	6.Mamsa sara	6.Majja sara
7.Sukra sara	7.Rakta sara	7.Sukra sara
8.Sattva sara	8.Twak sara	8.Sattva sara

(The sequence in which acharyas have explained Sara is also different. Both Caraka and Vaghbata have described Sara in the same order of Dhātu from Rasa to Sukra and ending with Satva Sara. But Susrutha has reversed the order and he also opined that the individuals have prosperity and longevity in the preceding order)

IMPORTANCE OF SARA PAREEKSHA

The strength of the individual cannot be measured by merely looking at the body as he is lean or corpulent. It is observed that some persons having small bodies and leanness are strong just like the small ants that have small body and look emaciated but can carry a heavy load. Hence one should examine the patient in respect of Sara. Sara is the tool to assess Bala, which also indicates the power of resistance against disease. Since Sara is an indicator of a particular Dhātu, the number of Dhātu Saratha present in the body of the individual will be directly proportional to his/her Bala or immunity- It is also observed that an individual with the predominance of a particular Sara will have more resistance against the diseases affecting that particular Dhātu, just like Kashyapa said Tvak Sara children have disease-free Tvak, and their skin is capable of rapid healing of wounds.^[6]

RAKTA SARATA

In Ayurveda 'Rakta sara' refers to the essence or quality of the blood tissue (Rakta Dhātu). Physical characters like unctuous, reddish and charming with radiant appearance of ears, eyes, face. The term "Rakta Sara" can be broken down into two parts:

1. Rakta: Refers to the blood tissue (Rakta Dhātu) in the body.
2. Sara: Means essence, quality, or purity.

Therefore, Rakta Sara refers to the quality or purity of the blood tissue in the body.^[7]

Importance of Rakta Sara-Rakta Sara is a Sanskrit term that refers to the essence or quality of the blood tissue (Rakta Dhātu) in the body. It encompasses the physical, chemical, and biological properties of blood that determine its overall health and functioning.

The rakta sara lakshanas according to caraka can be divided into 2 categories.

- 1) Physical
- 2) Psychological.

Physical characters like unctuous, reddish and charming with radiant appearance of tongue, nose, lips, sole of hands, nails, forehead, and genital organs.^[8]

Psychological characters are happiness, great genius, enthusiasm, tenderness, moderate strength, intolerance to discomfort, intolerance to heat.^[9]

In ancient days, due to unavailability of devices, study of Dhātu was done by examining external parts of body. Sara Pariksha is one of the most important examinations which gives an idea about qualitative state of Dhātu. People who have Rakta Dhātu Sarata are invested with highlights such as ears, eyes, oral pit, tongue, palms, soles, nails, and penis; every one of these organs are of red shading.^[14] They can't tolerate strenuous occupation or hot atmosphere. People having the brilliance of Rakta (Blood), their body stays hot. Reddish colour of pinna of ear shows proper nourishment of Rakta, Mamsa and Asthi Dhātu. Predominance of Teja, Jala and Prithvi Mahabhūta, Eyes appears Bhrajishnu (Bright or radiant) due to predominance of Teja Mahabhūta. Due to predominance of Jala and Teja Mahabhūta, eyes are clean and beautiful (Shrimat). Saara pareeksha is meant for the detailed examination of dhatus and manas. Dhātu pareeksha includes the assessment of its quantity and sara with respect to structure, function and properties of dhatus. Sara is the indication of sahaja bala and it is the parameter for assessment of bala. It indicates the healthy status of the body as well as resistance to the diseases. By assessing the Sara one can identify the present status of health of an individual.^[10]

According to Ayurveda, a person with a balanced Raktasara (the essence of blood) is less likely to experience skin diseases. Here are some reasons why: Healthy Blood Quality

1. Pure blood: Raktasara represents the pure and essential part of blood. When Raktasara is balanced, the blood is healthy and pure, reducing the likelihood of skin diseases.
2. Effective detoxification: Balanced Raktasara ensures effective detoxification of the blood, removing toxins and waste products that can cause skin diseases.
3. Strong Immune System: Immune system support: Raktasara plays a crucial role in supporting the immune system. A balanced Raktasara ensures a strong immune system, which can fight off infections and diseases that affect the skin.

4. Reduced inflammation: Balanced Raktasara reduces inflammation in the body, which is a common underlying factor in many skin diseases.
5. Skin nourishment: Raktasara provides nourishment to the skin, keeping it healthy and resilient.
6. Skin regeneration: Balanced Raktasara supports the regeneration of skin cells, reducing the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and age spots.^[11]

Factors that Affect Rakta Sara

Several factors can affect Rakta Sara, including

1. Diet: Consuming a diet that is high in processed foods, sugar, and unhealthy fats can negatively impact Rakta Sara.
2. Lifestyle: A sedentary lifestyle, lack of exercise, and poor sleep habits can also affect Rakta Sara.
3. Environmental toxins: Exposure to environmental toxins, such as pollution and pesticides, can also impact Rakta Sara. Rakta Sarata levels are also affected by prenatal, natal and postnatal endogenous and external influences.^[18] That is why a person has a distinct level of Rakta Sarata at various ages and in different Ritu (Season). It can be enhanced with appropriate Ahara and Vihara.^[12]

DISCUSSION

Saara is the purest form of a Dhatu, which indicates the Bala of a person against Vyadhi. Bala can be considered as Vyadhihikshamatva and strength of the person.^[20] Raktasara is refers to the essence or the most important part of blood. In Ayurveda, Raktasara is considered one of the most vital concepts in understanding the physiology and pathology of the human body. Rakta-Sara, specifically emphasized in the discussion, refers to the highest quality and quantity of blood tissue. Individuals with Rakta-Sara excellent in Rakta Dhatu compared to other Dhatus. They possess distinct physical and psychological characteristics, such as a radiant appearance, sharp intellect, and happiness.^[13]

Rakta-Sara individuals are less susceptible to blood-related disorders and exhibit resilience against physical and psychological ailments. The reflection or glow of skin color is the main function of Bhrajaka Pita in normal state. In Susrutha Samhita, a person having oily and coppery nails, eyes, palate, tongue, palms, and soles is considered Rakta Sara purusha.^[14] According to Kashyapa, Rakta Sara individual who is known to possess unctuous and coppery nails, eyes, palate, tongue, lips, palms, and soles.^[15] The perfect state of Raktha dhatu can lead to increased body metabolism, which leads to an increase in BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate). This can lead to increased circulation and will result in redness in the skin and mucus membranes. The increased temperature due to higher BMR will be the reason for their intolerance towards heat.^[16] It plays a crucial role in maintaining the health and well-being of the individual. Understanding Raktasara is essential for the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases in

Ayurveda.

Here are the characteristics of Rakta Sara, along with their explanations

1. Snigdha: (Unctuous, smooth, or oily) Rakta Sara is said to be snigdha, meaning it has a smooth, unctuous quality. This characteristic is essential for maintaining healthy skin, hair, and mucous membranes.
2. Drava: (Liquid or fluid) Rakta Sara is described as drava, meaning it has a liquid or fluid quality. This characteristic is essential for maintaining healthy blood circulation and nourishing the body's tissues.
3. Ushna: (Hot or warming) Rakta Sara is said to be ushna, meaning it has a hot or warming quality. This characteristic is essential for maintaining healthy metabolism, digestion, and energy production.
4. Sara: (Essence or extract) Rakta Sara is considered the essence or extract of the blood tissue. It is responsible for nourishing and sustaining the body's tissues
5. Prasada: (Clarity or purity) Rakta Sara is said to possess prasada, meaning clarity or purity. This characteristic is essential for maintaining healthy skin, hair, and mucous membranes, as well as overall physical and mental well-being.^[17]

CONCLUSION

Understanding an individual's Sara holds significant significance in different aspects. It aids in evaluating an individual's strength accurately, surpassing mere physical appearances. Raktasara is a vital concept in Ayurveda, representing the essence of blood. It plays a crucial role in maintaining the health and well-being of the individual. Understanding Raktasara is essential for the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases in Ayurveda. Rakta Sara analysis is valuable in the prevention of certain genetic blood-related diseases, as it helps identify potential risks and allows for proactive measures.

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