

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON MECHANISM OF PRANA

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## ABSTRACT

*Prana* is prime and most significant energy source for a living body to perform all biological processes and corporeal activities. Ayurved science has very broad understanding on *prana* as it does not believe *prana* as only breath or as only food. There are twelve *prana* are accepted by ayurved science. *Prana* nourish not only *shodash vikara* which are anatomical and physiological parts of a living body but nourish *ashtadha prakriti* as well. Here, effort has been done to understand twelve *prana*, how they nourish different factors of *ayu* and how they circulate through body.

**KEYWORDS:** *Prana, Ayu, Anuvartana, Circulation of prana.*

## INTRODUCTION

Acharya Shushruta described 12 '*Prana*' in *Shareer sthana*. (Su. Sha. 4/3)<sup>[1]</sup>

So, *ayurved* describes twelve *prana* as, *Agni, Som, Vayu, Sattva, Rajah, Tama*, five *Indriyani* and *Bhutatma*.

Acharya *Charaka* describes all mechanism of *prana* that how *prana* resides and how *prana* circulate in body in *adhyay 29<sup>th</sup>* and *adhyay 30<sup>th</sup>*.

*Prana* are residing in ten *pranayataniya*. Those are two temples, three vital organs (heart, bladder and head), throat, blood, semen, *ojas* and anorectal region. (Ch. Su. 29/3)<sup>[2]</sup>

From the heart as root, ten great vessels carrying *ojas* pulsate all over the body. (Ch. Su. 30/8)<sup>[3]</sup>

*Ojas* is crean of all nutrition of whole body and *prana* is established in *ojas*. (Ch. Su. 30/11)<sup>[4]</sup>

## OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The prime objective of *Ayurveda* is, as described in *adhyay 30<sup>th</sup>* of *Charaka samhita, Proyajanam chasya swasthasya swasthyarakshanamaaturasya vikaraprashamanam ch* ||<sup>[5]</sup>

It is, to preserve healthy status of one who is healthy and to cure diseases of one who is ill. It is that to procure healthy state of '*prakrit dhatu*'. So to achieve the objective *Dhatusamy* is prime necessity. More over prime objective of the '*tantra*' is specified as,

*Dhatusamyakriya chokta tantrasyasya prayojanam* // (Ch. Su. 1/53)<sup>[6]</sup>

So, we should have understanding of what is '*Dhatusamy*' and how it is upheld constantly. *Dhatusamy* is equilibrium of sustaining and nourishing factors. To sustain *Dhatusamy*, there is a need of continuously supplying of various nourishing factors. For this, there is a need of a cyclic process which continuously supplies new tissues or cells to consumed tissues or cells in various biological processes and various corporeal activities. In *ayurved*, this cyclic process is called *Anuvartan*. This process of *Anuvartan* takes place in a certain frame work. The frame work of a living body is termed as *Samvayata*.

*Dhatusamy* and healthy life are defined as, superior development, strength, lustre and happy life. (Ch. Su. 28/3)<sup>[7]</sup>

To maintain it, process of *Anuvartan* has been take place from birth to death. *Anuvartan* is cyclic process. *Anuvartan* is a constant phenomenon which continuously supplies energy to body tissue. (Ch. Su. 28/3)<sup>[8]</sup>

Here, energy is *Prana* which fulfil requirement of *Dhatu*s which are consumed during various biological processes.

*Prana* are primary and most important energy source to continue process of *Anuvartan* throughout lifetime.

In *adhyay* 30<sup>th</sup> of *Sutrasthan*, *Acharya charaka* termed *ayu* is defined with its synonyms as, *Chetananuvritti*, *Jivita*, *Anubandha*, *Dhari*. (Ch. Su. 30/22)<sup>[9]</sup>

These four synonyms are defined by various commenters of *charaka samhita* as,

1. चेतनानुवृत्ति = चैतन्यसन्तान, गर्भावधि मरण पर्यन्त बोद्धव्य...
2. जीवित = जीवयति प्राणान् धारयतीति जीवितम् |
3. अनुबंध = प्राणैः सह संयोगः |
4. धारि = धारयति शरीरम् इति धारि | जीवधारक संयोग...

So, *ayu* is itself *Anuvartan* which termed as '*Chetananuvritti*'. All these terms are stuck around supply of '*Prana*' and its importance in process of '*Anuvartan*'. So core factor in the process of *Anuvartan* is *prana*. The living entity is termed as '*Prani*' because of importance of *prana*.

The word *prani* is used in ancient Indian literature and also in *Ayurveda* Sometimes addressing human beings including animals. This apparently means to say that they possess *prana* or they live with *prana*.

At some instances *prana* is also correlated with breath mechanism of respiration. One of five type of *vata dosha* is also called as *prana vayu*.

*Prana* is not the synonym of *vata dosa* in the body, though at large the latter carry out the work of the former. No doubt the *prana* is responsible for all physiological and psychological functions.

The *ojas*, which maintains the living beings by its saturation; without which no life of creatures exists, which is the initial essence of embryo and also the essence of its nourishing material, which enters into the cardiac cycle first, which destroyed leads to destruction, which is located in heart, which is the cream of the nutrient fluid in the body, and where '*prana*' are aboded. So most essential essence which nourishes all tissue and cells till death contains *prana* in it.<sup>[10]</sup>

As above mentioned, *Acharya sushruta* describes twelve *prana*. These 12 types of *prana* supply energy force which keep intact conjunction of *shareer*, *indriya*, *sattva* and *aatma*, i.e. concept of *ayu*.

*Ayu* is conjunction of these four factors or divisions. The above mentioned twelve *prana* are also can be divided in four divisions according to the four divisions of *ayu*.

1. *Agni*, *Som* and *Vayu prana* can be divided as correlation with *Shareer*.
2. *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama prana* can be divided as correlation with *Sattva*.
3. *Panchendriya* can be divided as correlation with *Indriya*.
4. *Bhutatma prana* can be divided as correlation with *Atma*.

More, these four divisions of twelve *prana* nourish respective four factors of *ayu*. It is not one to one correlation and nourishment but according to a principle of '*vyapadeshtu bhuyasa*'.

1. *Agni*, *Som* and *Vayu prana* nourish *Shareer*.
2. *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama prana* nourish *Sattva*.
3. *Panchendriya prana* nourish *Indriya*.
4. *Bhutatma prana* nourish *Atma*.

To obtain long life, the long lasting conjunction of *shareer*, *indriya*, *sattva* and *aatma* is essential. For this, the process of *Anuvartan* is needed which continuously supply *Prana* to this conjunction. *Anuvartan* is combination of various biological processes. These biological processes use *prana* as continuous supply of energy. Apart from biological processes, a human being called as '*Karma Purusha*' deal with various objects in its surrounding atmosphere through various types of corporeal activities (*Laukika karma*).<sup>[11]</sup> For them also, '*Karma Purusha*' needs energy which is supplied by *prana*.

*Prana* are fulfilled (mainly from food and breath) according to their need. Intake of *prana* is regulated by *ashtadha prakriti*. *Shodash vikara* take part in above mentioned biological processes and corporeal activities.

*Prana* reside mostly in ten *pranayataniya*. *Prana* are circulated through ten *Dashamahamuliya dhamani* (ten great vessels) in whole body (Ch.Su.30/8).<sup>[12]</sup> Circulation of *prana* is conducted by the heart. These ten great vessels origin from the heart and supply *prana* from the heart to whole body.

*Ras Dhatu* is medium in supplying *prana* all over body. The origin root of *pranavaha srotasa* and *Rasvaha srotasa* is the heart. From heart, digested *Aahar rasa-Rasa Dhatu* travels to whole body and is metabolized into various nutrition. *Prana*(not breath but food and the above mentioned twelve *prana*) are embedded with *Rasa Dhatu* and supply energy to whole body. The strong reference of *Charaka samhita* suggest that, i.e., Ch.Sa.3/12<sup>[13]</sup> and Ch.Su. 27/349.<sup>[14]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

*Ayurved* science describes *prana* in broad sense. *Acharya sushruta* describes twelve *prana*. *Prana* supply nourishment to whole body or *Ayu*. Four main division of concept of *ayu* – *Sharir*, *Indriya*, *Sattva* and *Aatma* get nourished by four division of twelve *prana*. There are certain mechanism of resides of *prana* and circulation of

*prana*. *Prana* are residing in ten *pranayataniya* and circulated from heart to whole body through ten great vessels. In circulation of *prana*, *Ras Dhatu* becomes medium. *Prana* embed in *Ras Dhatu* and circulated through all over body and supply nutrition.

14. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 374.

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2. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 181.
3. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 185.
4. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 185.
5. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 187.
6. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 14.
7. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 174.
8. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 174.
9. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 186.
10. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 185.
11. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 50-76.
12. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 185.
13. Agnivesa, Charaka samhita, Sri cakrapanidatta, Ayurvedadipika commentary, Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Subharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2014; 312.