

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 "Dhaar"². It give life, retains *Prana* and is called "Jeevitham"². Though life is lived from moment to moment, there is a continuity in this whole process. So it is called "Nityagd"².

It connects the *para* and *apara shareera* thus *Ayu* is named as "Anubandha"². *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

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 sattva* (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 span³.

One who pocesses 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 span⁴.

DHEERGHAYU IN RELATION WITH PRAKRUTI AND GARBHA:-

Prakruti (constitution) plays a important role in the proper estimation of span of life⁵, in which qualities mentioned for *Kapha Prakruti* is endowed with the excellence of strength, wealth, knowledge, energy, peace and longevity⁶.

The child born by proper *Vyavaya kala* (suitable day for copulation) will be having long life, wealth and strength⁷.

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 lived⁸.

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 examined⁹.

Dashavidha Pareeksha (tenfold of examination) for the assessment of *Ayu* are explained, they are *Prakruti* (constitution), *Vikruti* (morbidness), *Sara* (excellence of *Dathu'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 child¹¹.

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 possess 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 *dheerghayu* because while explaining the characteristic features of *Kapha Prakruti* person, *Acharya* explained the term "*balavar*". Here *bala* is considered 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 *dheerghayu*,

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 disorders¹² 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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