



Review Article

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ROLE OF CLIMATE IN PRACTICE OF *PANCHAKARMA*: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science of life focusing not only to cure the *Rogi* but also towards the maintenance of the health of a healthy person. *Panchakarma* is a modality giving a variety of opportunities to fulfill the main aim of *Ayurveda*. There are lots of factors which are involved to certainly administer therapy in such a way that it will always be infallibly effective. Among all those factors climate or *Kala* is one of the factors which influences almost every aspect in one way or the other. Today the Koppen Climate classification gives us the background to understand the climatic conditions in various places. These climate conditions will occur according to the *Desha* also, so *Desha* plays a direct role in influencing the *Kala* factor as Six seasons are not to be found everywhere around the globe. This variation of the seasons makes difficult for the physician to apply the concepts of *Ritu* and *Shodhana* accordingly for e.g., a place like Bengaluru has a moderate climate all over year yet being near to equator as compare to other cities in Karnataka because of the height from seas level. Therefore, an understanding of comparing the current seasons of cities based on distance from equator, height from sea level with the *Sadharana* and *Asadharana Ritu* for commencing the *Sukhatama Vamanadi Karma* is needed. Therefore, an attempt is made to describe the entire possible climate factors which play a role in commencing the *Panchakarma* therapies effectively.

Keywords: *Kala*, *Desha*, *Panchakarma*, Climate

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda the science of life evolved from the *Atharva Veda*, which believes that health stands at the very root of achieving the four essential pursuits of life as enunciated by *Acharya Charaka* - *Dharma* (virtue), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire), *Moksha* (emancipation). Diseases are major impediments for productive activities and destroyers of health, well being and life. Achieving not just a state of health but a state of healthy longevity has always been the cherished wish of mankind. '*Jivema Sharadh Shatam Pashyema Sharadh Shatam*' the *Atharvana* hymn explicitly intends a longing for hundred years of enjoyable life with unhindered, unimpaired health. In accordance to this, the main objective of *Ayurveda* is "*Swasthasya Swasthyarakshanam*" and "*Aturasya Vikaraprashamanam* which emphasizes the prime importance of maintenance and promotion of health in the healthy and cures the *Rogi*, followed by the secondary intent of using therapeutic measures to manage the ailment in the diseased persons. The cosmic rhythm is a calendar year, which happens in a cyclical way and described as *Ritu*. According to Indian calendar there are six seasons and there is a definite relation of seasonal variations, their influences on *doshas* and the resultant illness. Hence, *Ayurveda* highlights the concept of *Ritu* and its significance for the maintenance of *Swastha*, as well as the treatment of *Rogi*. To achieve this, two modes of therapies are described - *Shodhana* (eliminatory procedures) and *Shamana* (palliative procedures). *Shodhana* therapy is indicated in conditions where *Bahudoshavastha* is present, eradicating *Prakupita Doshas* as per seasons to prevent further onset of diseases. The vitiated *Doshas* can be compared to trees, unless the tree in uprooted from its root, it will grow again. Similarly,

Doshas when not eliminated from the roots will recur again. This is where *Shodhana* therapy plays a vital role in *Chikitsa*. *Panchakarma* is the specialized bio-purificatory (*Shodhana*) techniques of *Ayurveda* which exculpate the *Utklishita Doshas*. Along with *Panchakarma*, *Bahya Upakramas* like *Udvartana*, *Mardana*, *Abhyanga*, etc. are also beneficial for managing the vitiated *doshas*.

To administer therapies in such a way that it will be infallibly effective, the understanding of the difference in variations of *Doshas*, *Bheshaja*, *Desha*, *Kala*, *Bala*, *Sharira*, *Ahara*, *Satmya*, *Satva*, *Prakriti*, *Vaya* is very important.¹ Among these factors who determine the result of treatment, *Kala* contributes only one part in it. *Kala* may vary according to the change of seasons or according to the periodicity of the disease, but one should always keep in mind that the seasons are also influenced by the *Desha*. *Desha* plays a direct role in the *Kala* factor as six seasons are not to be found everywhere around the globe. The *Kala* influences our body in maintaining the physiology as well as the pathology of any disease, meanwhile it has a direct role in getting the desired therapeutic effect if a procedure is performed with due consideration to *Kala*. Climate is a factor which can play a direct role in to fulfill the main aims of *Ayurveda* which are to maintain the health of a healthy person and to cure the *Rogi*. Earth revolves around the sun and its tilting at 23.5 degree causes the seasons to occur in different regions accordingly. Broadly two types of classifications are found in the texts that are *Shishiradi Ritu* in which, year is divided into 6 seasons *Vasant*, *Greeshma*, *Varsha*, *Sharad*, *Hemanta*, *Shishira*, the purpose is solely to determine the appropriate period for *Shodhana Prati* i.e., administration of *Panchakarma* therapies.² Another classification is *Pravritadi*

Ritu, here *Shishira Ritu* does not find a place in this classification, instead there is an addition of *Praavruta Ritu* before *Varsha Ritu* which is early rainy season.³ Some physicians explain these 2 types of classification of the seasons of the year in a different way. According to them, in the Northern side of Ganga winter lasts for a longer period and there is less rainfall because of which the year is classified as per *Shishiradi Ritus*. But in the Southern side of Ganga because of longer period of rain and less of winter, the year is classified as per *Praavrutaadi Ritus*. Further *Shishira*, *Vasanta* and *Greeshma Ritus* are characterized by the predominant influence of heat of sun on individual. Physically persons tend to become weak because of the sun and its act of dehydration, hence this period is termed as *Adana Kala*. *Varsha*, *Sharad* and *Hemanta Ritus* are characterized by the predominant cooling influence of the moon. By virtue of this cooling effect and act of hydration, person gains strength and this period is considered as *Visarga Kala*. *Dosha* also tends to change according to the *Ritu* as *Vata Dosha* gets *Sanchaya* in *Greeshma Ritu* which further gets *Prakupita* in *Pravruta Ritu* similarly *Pitta Dosha* which is *Sanchita* in *Varsha Ritu* gets *Prakupita* in *Sharad Ritu* and *Kapha Dosha* which got *Sanchita* in *Hemanta Ritu* gets *Prakupita* in *Vasanta Ritu*. *Hemanta* (winter), *Greeshma* (summer) and *Varsha* (rainy), these are the three seasons characterized by extreme cold, hot and rainy weather and termed as *Asadharana Ritus*. Flanked by them are the other three seasons, *Praavruta* (Early Rains), *Sharad* (autumn) and *Vasanta* (spring) which are of moderate nature, wherein there is moderation in cold, heat or rain. These are hence termed as *Sadharana Ritus*.⁴

The Koppen divides the climate broadly into five groups A-Tropical, B-Arid, C-Temperate, D-Continental and E-Polar. These classifications are further gets divided into sub classifications which can help understand the climatic conditions according to the areas which is a basic need to understand its further role in the panchakarma. *Desha* is basically of 3 types - *Anupa Desha* which contains deep forest of trees like *Hintala*, *Tamala*, *Narikela*. It is generally located at the banks of river and sea with mostly cold wind. *Vata*, *Kapha* dominates here and people are of *Sukumara*. *Jangala Desha* has deep forests of trees like *Kadara*, *Khadira*, and *Asana*. It abounds in thin, dry and rough sands as well as gravels which give rise to mirages. *Vata*, *Pitta* dominates in this type of land and people will be *Sthira* and *Kathina*. *Sadharana Desha* has characteristics of both *Deshas* and commonly known as mixed *Desha*. Here wheat, barley and maize are usual crops and grown in abundance. This *Desha* is pleasant for all type of living beings. The *Pitta Prakopa* is of mild nature. In order to prevent the occurrence of endogenous diseases, maintenance of tissue elements in homeostasis, one must undergo, *Vamana* in *Chaitra Masa* i.e., later half of *Vasanta Ritu*, *Virechana* in *Margashirsha Masa* i.e., later half of *Sharad Ritu*,⁵ *Anuvasana* and *Niruha Basti* in *Shravana Masa* i.e., later half of *Praavruta Ritu*, *Shirovirechana* in *Pravruta*, *Sharad* and *Vasanta Ritu*.⁶ Each *Ritu* consist of 2 *Masa*. *Dosha Prakopata* attainment is incomplete during first *Masa* of each *Ritu*. *Shodhana* should be followed in 2nd *Masa* of each *Ritu*. As complete *Prakopa Avastha* attainment is only during this *Masa*, hence easy and complete elimination of *Dosha* is possible. Similarly, *Acharya Vagbhata* also mentions that, one must promptly eliminate *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* accumulated respectively in summer, rainy and winter season in the months of, *Shravana*, *Kartika* and *Chaitra* respectively which are *Pravruta*, *Sharad* and *Vasanta Ritu*.⁷

Sadharana Ritus or moderate seasons are characterized by moderation in heat, cold, and rain. They are very enjoyable and they do not adversely affect the condition of the body and drugs. *Vamanadi Karmas* can be administered in a manner that is *Sukhatama*, without adversely affecting the conditions of the body and medicine used. In *Vasanta Ritu* the *Kapha* gets

accumulated in the seasons preceding the spring; it gets liquefied during the spring as the body is exposed to the increased heat of the sun during this time. Thus, the *Kapha*, so liquefied, affects both the power of metabolism as well as digestion. Elimination therapies consisting of *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Niruha* and *Anuvasana Basti* and *Shirovirechana* should be administered so as to eliminate the vitiated *Dosha*. *Vamana* should be administered in the month of *Chaitra* only.⁸ *Prakupita Kapha Avastha* will do *Vamana* easily which was facilitated by *Vasanta Ritu*.⁹ In *Sharad Ritu*, there is certain cold temperature in rainy season. *Pitta Chaya* occurs in body naturally in *Varsha Ritu* and body gets used to this low temperature. But intense hot sunrays lead to *Prakopa* of *Pitta* which was in *Sharad Ritu*, rainfall stops and sky become clearer. Hence, sunrays reach earth more intensely and climate become hotter. This sudden exposure can lead to disease of *Pitta dosha*. *Rakta* also gets *Prakupita* by the very nature of *Sharad Ritu*. Here *Tikta Gritapana*, *Virechana Karma* is adopted. *Raktamokshana* is also advised.¹⁰ In *Sharad Ritu* *Pitta* will be *Prakupita* and *Kapha* will be less therefore there will be *Sukhatma Virechana*. *Niruha Basti* should be practiced in *Varsha Ritu* as chances of getting affected by *Vata* disorders are more. The *Sanchita Vata* in *Gresham Ritu* will get *Prakupita* in *Varsha*. Hence *Basti* is advised to be given in the *Varsha Ritu*. *Basti* balances the *Vata* and also after its balancing, the other two *doshas* will be balanced spontaneously hence also called as *Ardha Chikitsa*. *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Shusruta* states the *Kala* for the *Anuvasana Basti* as depicted in Table 1.

Anuvasana is not given at night as *Dosha Utkleshana* occurs at that time, they can combine with the strength of the *Sneha* and can cause *Adhmana*, *Gaurava*, *Jwara*.¹¹ *Anuvasana* will be given in day as during day *Doshas* will be in normalcy, digestive fire is combined with the essence of food and the orifices of channels are open throughout the body. So *Basti* will spread all over the body.¹² In *Pittaadhike* and *Kaphaksheena Avastha*, *Ruksha* person is suffering from *Vata* disease, *Anuvasana* can be given at night in hot season.¹³ As in hot season *Pittaadhike*, *Daha*, *Such*, disease will increase in day time hence given in the beginning of the night.¹⁴ When there is *Vataadhikatama*, Severe Pain, when the patient had taken the food only then it can be given in day and end of the day.¹⁵

The effect of the *Nasya Karma* varies depending mainly upon the type of *Nasya Karma*, nature of the ingredients, nature of the *Yogas*, dosage pattern and more importantly the time of administration of *Nasya Karma* which needs to be understood from the point of Age of the individual, *Dosha* affected and *Ritu* in which the procedure is performed. There is dominance of *Kapha Dosha* in the beginning of the day and night, there is a dominance of *Pitta Dosha* in the mid-day and mid night and there is a dominance of *Vata Dosha* in the end of the day and night. *Kala* causes change in state of *Dosha* that will lead to the change of state of the *Vyadhi*. That means *Kala* is responsible to change the *Vyadhi Avastha*. (Table 2) Hence, a specific time is to be adopted for the administration of *Nasya Karma* based on the *Dosha* affected as morning, noon and evening for *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata* respectively. Table 3 states list of few *Panchakarma* related procedures in different *Ritu*.

Shodhana is not recommended in *Asadharana Ritus* as it is very unpleasant and the body as well as medicines are adversely affected by them as during *Hemant Ritu*, the body is exposed to great discomfort because of affliction by excessive cold. The *Doshas* do not get detached and remains adhered to the channels in the body due to their excessive firmness caused by the contact with the terrific cold wind. Medicine used for elimination therapies are by nature *Ushna* but because of affliction with excessive cold their therapeutic effectiveness is diminished.

When these therapeutic less potent drugs are administered to an individual whose body is unsuitable for the therapy, it does not produce the desired effect leading to *Ayoga* and body gets afflicted by *Vata*. *Chakrapani* denotes proper regimen accordingly to the need of the patient even in this extreme season by giving one example of giving *Trivrit* mixed with *Go Mutra* which increase the *Ushna Veerya* and should be given in large dose. During *Greeshma Ritu* there is great discomfort in the body because of the affliction with excessive heat. *Doshas* remain excessively detached due to its looseness caused by the contact with excessive hot wind as well as hot sun. Medicines used for elimination therapy are by nature hot but because of heat their therapeutic effects become all the more *Tikshna*. When these therapeutic drugs having excessive *Tikshna* effect are administered, there is excessive elimination of *Doshas* and body gets afflicted by *Atiyoga* and complications. During *Varsha Ritu* body become very deliquescent because of exposure to rain, water and invisibility of sun, moon and stars, overcasting of sky by clouds. Medicine is impaired, thus improper manifestation of urges of *Vamana* etc. and it takes longer time for the body to recover from the effects of these elimination therapies.

Acharyas have also mentioned about the things to follow when there is *Atyaayika* conditions. If Emergency arises during *Asadharana Ritus*, if immediate administration of *Shodhana* is required, then the natural manifestation of season, viz. excessive cold, heat and rains should be counter acted by artificial means which remain cold in summers and hot in winters. The qualities of *Aushadha* should be rendered according to those of the respective seasons by suitable combinations, processing and dosage. Thus, by bringing the dosage and potency of medicaments to the required level, *Panchakarma* must be administered with utmost care.¹⁶

Table 4 denotes for the *Kala* for *Nasya Karma* in emergency conditions. It is also to be considered specially as one should understand the urgency of *Vyadhi Kriya Kala* and must not let it surpass, as this might create further complications, failure and incurability of the diseases as time factor is highly potent.¹⁷

Charaka also states some *Trivrit Kalpa* according to the *Ritus* to be used which is as follow in Table 5.

Table 1: *Anuvasana Basti Kala*

Acharya	Day	End of the Day
Ch. Si. 1/22	Hemanta	Sharad
	Shishira	Grishma
	Vasanta	Varsha
Su. Ch. 37/51	Sheeta	Pravruta
	Vasanta	Grishma
		Varsha

Table 2: *Nasya Karma Kala*

Acharya	Purvahna	Madhyahna	Aparahna
Ch. Su. 5/57	Generally done in <i>Pravruta</i> , <i>Sharad</i> and <i>Vasanta Ritu</i>		
A.H. Su. 20/13-16	Kapha Dosh	Pitta Dosh	Vata Dosh
	Sharad and Vasanta Ritu	Sheeta Kala	Grishma Ritu
	In <i>Varsha Ritu</i> – <i>Sa Aatape</i> (When sky is clear)		

Table 3: *Panchakarma* related procedures in different *Ritus*

Ritu	Panchakarma related procedures
Shishira and Hemanta	<i>Abhyanga</i> , <i>Murdhanitaila</i> , <i>Mardana</i> , <i>Padaghata</i> , <i>Udvardana</i> , <i>Lepa</i> , <i>Swedana</i> (<i>Niragni</i>), <i>Jentak Swedana</i> , <i>Utsadana</i> , <i>Tapa Swedana</i>
Vasanta	<i>Vamana</i> , <i>Nasya</i> , <i>Dhumpana</i> , <i>Kavala</i> , <i>Gandoosha</i> , <i>Udvardana</i> , <i>Lepa</i> ,
Greeshma	<i>Ghritpana</i> , <i>Lepa</i> , <i>Dhara</i>
Varsha	<i>Asthapana Basti</i> , <i>Dhupana</i> , <i>Aatapa</i> , <i>Pragharshana</i> , <i>Lepa</i>

Table 4: *Nasya Karma Kala* in *Atyaayika* conditions

Acharya	Purvahna (Morning)	Madhyahna (Noon)	Aparahna (Evening)
Ch. Si. 2/23	In Emergency		
	Grishma Ritu (Emergency)	Sheeta Kala (Hemanta and Shishira)	-
	In <i>Varsha Ritu</i> – <i>Adurdina</i> (sky free from clouds)		
	In Other <i>Ritus</i> and Emergency, done by creating <i>Krutrima Gunopadana</i> (Artificial Environment)		

Table 5: *Virechana Aushadhi Kalpa* according to different *Ritus*

Ch. Ka. 7/56-60	Virechana Aushadhi Kalpa
Varsha	<i>Trivrit</i> + <i>Kutaja</i> + <i>Pippali</i> + <i>Shunthi</i>
Sharad	<i>Trivrit</i> + <i>Musta</i> + <i>Sharkara</i> + <i>Udichaya</i> + <i>Chandana</i> + <i>Madhuyasthi</i> + <i>Saptala</i> + <i>Draksha Rasa</i>
Hemanta	<i>Trivrit</i> + <i>Chitraka</i> + <i>Patha</i> + <i>Ajaj Sarala</i> + <i>Vacha</i> + <i>Swarnaksheeri</i>
Greeshma	<i>Trivrit</i> + <i>Sharkara</i>
All Ritus	<i>Trivrit</i> + <i>Trayamana</i> + <i>Saptala</i> + <i>Katurohini</i> + <i>Swarnaksheeri</i>

DISCUSSION

From the famous *Shloka* from *Puranas* “*Yata Pinde Tat Bhramande*” We can conclude whatever there is in environment is also there in the human body, which led to change in the human body according to season and hence regimens were made accordingly. The season plays a direct and important role in the practice of *Panchakarma* as almost everything revolves around this. It fulfils the purpose of both *Vikara Prashamana* and *Swastha Rakshana*. *Desha* also plays a major role in manifestation of the seasons as you cannot find every season in every *Desha* and through Koppen climate classification, we can easily get to know the season variations around the globe in current time and then correlate it with the *Ritu* and *Masa* to decide whether the procedure should be adopted the regimens for *Swastha* and *Rogi* keeping in the concepts of *Sadhrana Ritu*, *Asadharna Ritu* and *Ayaayika Kala*. To promote health, one must undergo *Ritushodhana* and hence can be saved from the endogenous diseases.

In Tropical (A) climate cities like Bengaluru has an average temperature of 18°C or higher with significant precipitation every month of the year. In Arid (B) climate, cities like Leh the temperature is near -8°C in coldest month and 24°C in the warmest month. In Temperate (C) climate, cities like Delhi the temperature is near 3°C in coldest month and 40°C in the warmest month. In Continental (D) climate, cities like Dras the temperature is near -8°C in coldest month and 24°C in the warmest month. In Polar (E) climate, cities like Nord Greenland, the temperature is near -31°C in coldest month and 7°C in the warmest month. In city like Delhi where climate is having extreme whether in summers as well as winters which marked as *Asadharna Ritu* and makes it difficult to commence the procedure with *Sukhatama*. On the other hands cities like Bengaluru where climate is having optimal temperature in which *Asadharna Ritu* can be managed easily for the commencement of the procedures. In Arid Lands like Leh and continental like Dras, it gets way more difficult to commence *Vamanadi* procedure. In Polar Climate where there is extreme *Sheeta Ritu* like in Antarctica or Greenland, there we can find immense difficulty to do *Vamanadi* procedures. Regions nearer to Equator having low sea level height will be having more like *Greeshma Ritu* and regions away from equator and having high sea level height will be more like *Hemanta Ritu*. For the classifications of season based on Ganga, the regions situated above Ganga are have longer *Sheeta Ritu* and the regions situated below Ganga are having longer period of rain and short winters. Therefore, one should classify the current climate and based on *Sadhrana* and *Asadharna Ritu* concept one should commence the procedure. *Charaka* States a solution for situations of *Asadharna Ritu* by providing artificial environment, adopting the right medicine like more *Tikshna Aushadhi* in *Hemanta Ritu*, Less *Tikshna* in *Greeshma Ritu* for the commencing of *Sukhatama Vamanadi Karmas*. Though *Sadhrana Ritus* will give a *Sukhatama* effect of the procedure but one should also not forget the *Kriyakala* of the *Roga* in *Rogi*. In *Swastha* as there is no much emergencies in adaptation of the *Panchakarma*, so a *Vaidhya* can wait for favorable climate to set in and then can perform *Panchakarma*. But in *Rogi*, it's not the same situation as there are various *Avasthas* that may set which will force the *Vaidhya* to adopt the contraindicated procedures in that *Ritu*. Hence *Charaka* has advised to make certain arrangements to adopt these procedures in an easy manner. If a *Rogi* have to get through the *Shodhana* in *Asadharna Ritu* then he will not wait for the favorable climate because of the *Kriyakala* making the *Roga Asadhya*. The *Dosha* vitiation is possible in seasons, a day, according to *Shusruta* classification of seasons in a day. If *Dosha* vitiation is kept as it is then it will produce different Disorders. To control them one has to undergo regular

Shodhana therapy in respective seasons, which is highlighted as *Ritushodhana* in literatures. Appropriate Administration of *Shodhana* and Other *Panchakarma* procedures in respective *Ritu* maintains the normalcy of *Vatadi Dosha*. To do that in easy manner without complications, with full potency of effect one should know all the aspects *Ritu* and *Desha*. *Desha* also plays a vital role in describing the climate conditions as in India with a diversity of land also have diversity in climate all over, it is very difficult to practice *Panchakarma* in foreign land like Europe, Russia etc. as they have a longer *Asadharna Ritu* which can make the procedure loose its actual purpose and efficacy. Hence out of the factors described in *Charaka Sutra* 15/5 *Kala* plays only one part in deciding the treatment with a dependence on *Desha* also, one should also consider the other factors like *Doshas*, *Bheshaja*, *Bala*, *Sharira*, *Ahara*, *Satmya*, *Satva*, *Prakriti*, *Vaya* before commencing any *Panchakarma* procedures.

CONCLUSION

Panchakarma as a word means five actions or five procedures intended to intensively cleanse and restore balance to the body and mind. Almost every department uses *Panchakarma* in one or other way for the benefits of the *Purusha*. One among the areas discussed widely about *Panchakarma* is about the time of administration. As Seasons are now changing day by day and doesn't resemble to the classical seasons dates and months due to the underlying causes, one should always use its *Yukti* for assessing *Kala* and *Desha* rather relying on the English calendars system to decide. Koppen Climate Classification talk about both climate and geographical areas and can be adopted to know the *Desha* and the climatic conditions in that region. By knowing the climatic conditions one can classify it into *Sadharana* and *Asadharana Ritu* and commence the *Panchakarma* accordingly with *Sukhatama* by following the regimens given.

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