

# A Conceptual Review of Clinical Importance of Bala and Bala Pariksha

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**Abstract:** *Taila bindu mootra pariksha, an ancient diagnostic technique mentioned in Ayurvedic texts, offers a unique and holistic approach to understanding disease pathology<sup>1</sup>. It involves observing the behaviour of an oil droplet on a patient's urine sample to infer dosha imbalances, metabolic irregularities, and disease prognosis. In the modern era, while advanced diagnostic tools like biochemical assays, imaging technologies, and molecular diagnostics are widely available, Taila bindu mootra pariksha remains relevant for its simplicity, cost-effectiveness, and non-invasive nature<sup>2</sup>. Recent studies have explored its potential as a preliminary screening tool in rural and resource-limited settings, emphasizing its value in early detection of metabolic disorders, kidney dysfunction, and urinary tract infections<sup>3</sup>. Integrating Taila bindu mootra pariksha with modern diagnostic techniques can enhance patient-centric care by combining traditional wisdom with evidence-based medicine. This paper reviews the method's clinical significance, historical context, and potential applications in modern diagnostic frameworks, suggesting avenues for future research<sup>4</sup>.*

**Keywords:** Taila bindu mootra pariksha, Ayurveda, diagnostic techniques, dosha imbalance, modern medicine, integrative diagnostics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda always offers the analysis of any idea from many perspectives. There are several angles to the physiological and anatomical entities described in Ayurveda, which help one understand topics more thoroughly. According to Ayurveda, the *Bala* being is multifaceted and cannot be divided into any one particular entity. *Bala* is essential to understanding the diagnosis, progression, fading, and propagation of diseases in addition to being a physiological concept. Hence, the concept of immunity is quite similar to the *bala* entity.

There are various concepts of *bala* in Ayurveda. It is so important for the health and treatment of an individual. So, there is a necessity to understand the concept of *bala pariksha* in patients and healthy individuals. *Charaka*, *Sushruta* and *Vagbhatta* have explained about concepts of *bala*. The present review was done in order to collect the concept of *bala*, its *pariksha* and its implication in management of disease.

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To study the clinical importance of *Bala* and *Bala pariksha*.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this study, various *Ayurvedic* classical texts have been referred to fulfill this part. It includes literary parts of *bala* and *bala parikshas* described in classical texts. Materials on the physiology of and sleep have been gathered from a variety of periodicals, Ayurvedic text books, original literatures, manuscripts, Sanskrit dictionaries, reliable websites (Pub Med, for example), reputable magazines, etc.

### MEANING OF BALA AS PER AYURVEDA

*Prakrita Kapha* is known as *Bala* according to Charaka, however it has since been renamed as *Ojas* (*Shlaishmik oja*), which is the body's *Saara*. Also, *Daurbalya* or lack of *Bala* is *Lakshana* of *Oja Kshaya*. The subtype of *vata dosha*, *udana vayu* is also called as *bala* as one of its *karma* is *bala*.

According to *Yogratnakar*, *Agni* is considered as *Moola* (Origin) of *Bala* of any *Vyakti*<sup>[1]</sup>. *Agni* is responsible for the Generation and Maintenance of *Bala* in the Body<sup>[2]</sup>. *Acharya Charaka* mentioned *Dashvidha Pariksha* for the evaluation of *Bala* of the patient and disease. *Bala* is judged on the basis of *Prakriti*, *Vikruti*, *Sara*, *Samhanana*, *Pramana*, *Satmyaa*, *Satva*, *Aaharshakti*, *Vyamashakti* and *Vaya*.<sup>[3]</sup>

### CLASSIFICATION OF BALA:

As per *Charakacharya*, strength is of three types-congenital (*sahaja*), time effected (*kalaja*) and acquired (*yuktikruta*). Congenital is that which is natural to the body and mind; time-effected is due to seasonal variations and age factor. Acquired one is produced by proper application of diet and exercise.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### SAHAJ BALA (Natural Strength)

*Sahaja Bala*, which can be thought of as strength acquired by birth, is the *Sharirika* and *Manasika Bala* that is achieved due to *Matruja* and *Pitruja bhavas* like *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Virya*, *Ojus*, etc.

It states that *Sahaja Bala* is natural *Bala* of *Sharira* and *Satva* i.e. *Bala* of body and the mind. *Chakrapani* in the commentary of *charak Samhita* stated that *prakrut* is *janmadipravrutta* that is which is inherited since birth for *prakrut dhatu vriddhi*.<sup>[5]</sup>

*Sahaja bala* can be compared to Innate Immunity which refers to nonspecific defense mechanisms that occur immediately or within hours of an antigens appearance in the body. Environmental influences or epigenetic changes also affect the immune status since birth.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### KAALAJ BALA (Periodic Strength)

This kind of *bala* is dependent on the season (climatic changes) and the person's age. Diseases are found to be more common in various seasons because to *kalaja bala* hani.

Due to a shift in the contribution of *kalaja bala*, people have less *Bala* during childhood and old age and are therefore more susceptible to sickness.

*Rutu Sandhi* is the best example of *Kaalaja Bala* hani in Ayurveda; as a result, special attention is mentioned in *Rutucharya* for retaining *Bala* during that time.

Thus, the purpose of *Rutucharya* is seen in all classics which shows how much importance *Acharyas* have given to *Kalaja Bala*.

Here *kalaj bala* which is divided as –

*Kalatah Bala* is the *bala* differing as per seasons or climate. It is further classified as per *Uttama*, *Madhyama* and *Heena bala* in *Hemanta & Shishir*, *Vasanta & Sharada*, *Grishma & Varsha Ritu* respectively.

*Vayatah Bala* is the *bala* with reference to three Age groups. It is further classified as per *Uttama* and *Heena bala* in *youvana* and *vriddhavastha* resp.

There is a study showing that the activity of almost a quarter of our genes differs according to the time of year, some are more active in winter and others in summer. This seasonality also affects our immune cells and the composition of our blood and adipose tissue.<sup>[7]</sup>

Researchers prove that Physiological ageing is accompanied by decline in immune system function.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### YUKTIKRUTA BALA (Acquired Strength)

It depends on what the individual does in terms of *Aahara*, *Vihara*, and *Aushadha* Sevana. This kind of *Bala* is influenced by a person's mindset, eating patterns, exercise routine, and cleanliness practises.

A person can have a decent quality of life if they practise *Dinacharyas*, *Rutucharyas*, healthy eating habits, and *Rasayan* therapies, and this is made possible by keeping *Yuktikruta Bala* in good condition.

This *Bala* is entirely dependent on the activities of the individual. One can develop *yuktikrut bala* by keeping good quality of *aahar*, *vihaar* and *aushadha sevan*.

*Aaharaj vruddhi* of *bala* can be done by including *ghruta* and *godugdha* in food as *rasayan*.

For *viharaj bala vruddhi* people should do daily *abhyanga* and *vyayama* as it increases *bala*. Different kinds of *balya aushadhi* like *ashwagandha*, *shalparni*, *vidarikanda* should be administered. This can be compared to Adaptive Immunity.

Physical activity and nutrition are important in a healthy lifestyle with potential benefits to immunity.<sup>[9]</sup>

Based on capacity to do physical activity it is further classified as :

*Pravar Bala*, *Madhyam Bala* and *Avara Bala*. On the basis of working capacity of individual this is done.<sup>[10]</sup>

- **PRAVARA BALA:** Here, despite extreme mental stress, the person engages in all manner of physical activity without ever becoming fatigued. An individual with *pravara bala* is both physically and mentally active and has a healthy lifestyle. He is usually stress free.
- **AVARA BALA :** This kind of *bala* makes its owner easily exhausted. This group of individuals lacks the physical stamina to sustain stress or the mental fortitude to handle it. That is, it is opposite to the *Pravara bala*.
- **MADHYAM BALA:** This *bala* is in between that of *Pravara and Avara bala*.

#### **CRITERIA FOR ASSESING BALA:**

A) *Bala* is presented in two main aspects. - 1) *Vyayamshakti* 2) *Vyadhikshamatva*

##### **1. Vyayamshakti :**

charakacharya has explained methods to assess *bala* in *vimansthana*.<sup>[11]</sup>

*Vyayama Shakti* evaluates *bala*. In respect to *bala* and *Ojas*, *Dalhanana* made additional comments. According to him, *bala* is determined by a person's capacity to carry and lift heavy objects. *Bala* is *karmashakti*, which is Sanskrit for "power to work."

##### **Vyadhikshamatva:**

The word "*Vyadhikshamathava*" refers to resistance against sickness.<sup>[12]</sup> *Vyadhikshamatva* differs in different personalities as it depends on various factors.

*Vyadhikshamathava* is the term used to describe the body's ability to fend off and prevent sickness. That contains the method used to provide *Vyadhi prativandhyakatva*.

*Chakrapani* shares the same perspective, i.e., the capacity for resistance and illness prevention.

##### **B) Assessment of Bala with dashavidha aatur bala pariksha:**

Examination of the patient is conducted for the knowledge of the span of life or of the degree of strength and morbidity. The amount of drug to be administered to the patient should be based on the *bala* as it affects the expected effect on the patient.<sup>[13]</sup> Hence the patient should be examined in respect of-

**Prakriti** (constitution): the constitution of body is based on predominance of *doshas*. And so the *bala* differs as the individual has *alpabala* if they have *vata prakriti*, *madhyam bala* if they have *pitta prakriti*, and *balavana* if they have *kapha prakriti*.

**Vikriti** (morbidity): Here, the *roga* is evaluated using the *dosha*, *dusya*, *kala*, and *bala*.

**Sara** (constitution of *dhatu*): *Ashtasaras* are described in order to understand the *bala pramana* of *purusha*. Among which *Raktasara purusha* exhibits *lakshana* like *Anatibala*(moderate strength), *Mansa*, *majja* and *shukrasara purusha* are *balavanta*, *sarvasara purusha* is very strong i.e *atibalavana*

**Samhanana** (compactness): *Samhanana* means well compacted. Those having well-compact body are strong, otherwise weak, and those having moderate compactness have medium strength.

**Pramana** (measurement): The persons having normal measurement of the body are endowed with longevity, strength, immunity, happiness, supremacy, wealth and other desired qualities. Those having body with less or more measurements have qualities contrary to these.

**Satmya** (suitability): If the person is *sarvarasa satmya* then he is *balavana*, if the person is *Eka rasa satmya* then he is of *alpabala* and if *madhyam rasa satmya* then *madhyam bala*.

**Sattva** (psyche): *Sattva* is known as mind. It controls the body by conjunction with the self. Psyche is of three types according to strength superior, medium and inferior. Accordingly, the persons having superior psyche are, in fact, *sattwasara* (with *sattwa* as essence) and have been described in context of *saras*. Those having medium psyche sustain themselves at the instance of others or entirely by others. But those possessing inferior mind can sustain neither by themselves nor by others. That is, the person with *pravara sattva*, can tolerate severe pain produced by *nija* and *agantuja vyadhies*. Individuals having *madhyama sattva* tolerate the pain for themselves when they realize that other can also tolerate it. Then they at a times gain strength from others. Those having *avara sattva* neither by themselves nor through others can sustain their mental strength.<sup>[14]</sup>

**Aaharshakti**: This is examined by the power of ingestion as well as digestion. Strength and life depend on diet.

**Vyayamshakti** (power of exercise): The power of exercise should be examined by the capacity for work. The three types of strength are inferred from the capacity for work. If the person can perform more physical work then he is of *pravara bala*, if moderately then *madhyam bala* and if less then *avara bala*.<sup>[15]</sup>

**Vaya** (age): Age is defined as the state of body responding to the length of time. *Balavastha* up to 16 yrs are *alpa bala*, *Madhyamavastha* upto 16 to 60 yrs are *uttama bala* and *Jirnavastha* upto 60 to 100 yrs are *alpa bala*.<sup>[16]</sup>

#### **BALA VRIDDHIKAR BHAVA:**

*Acharya charaka* has explained *balavriddhikar bhava* i.e factors which leads to increase *bala*. These factors lead to the growth of the body in its entirety such as – observance of time, natural process, excellence of diet and absence of damage.

These factors lead to the increase of strength such as – birth in a place having strong persons, that in a time conducive for strength, favourable time, excellence of seed and soil, excellence of diet, body, suitability and psyche; natural mechanism, youth, physical exercise and cheerfulness.<sup>[17]</sup>

#### **RELATION OF BALA WITH DIFFERENT ENTITIES –**

##### **Bala as a result of Agni Prakrita Kriya -**

Normal *agni* is responsible for strength and depends on the *ahar (anna)* that is consumed by us. The food consumed is digested with the help of *jatharagni* to produce good *ahar rasa* which when processed through *rasadi agni* leads to formation of good *rasadi dhatu*. Also, *saman vayu* increases strength of *jatharagni*.<sup>[18]</sup>

This *Agni* is of four types on the basis of *Bala*, *Namely Teekshna, Mrudu, Vishama* and *Sama*. *Teekshna, Mrudu, Vishama* is responsible for various pathologies whereas *Sama Agni* is considered as the most optimum amongst all.<sup>[19]</sup>

*Bala* as a result of *Aahara Prakrita Karma* - Food is the basic necessity of life. The immunity is largely dependent on the food we consume as it is the building block of the body. *Aahara* is definitely the prime source for *Bala*. Hence Unbalanced *Aahara* will result in various *Vyadhi*.<sup>[20]</sup>

##### **Bala and Dosha Sambandha –**

All *vata, pitta* and *kapha*, in normal state, endows the person with unaffected sense organs, strength, complexion and happiness and also with a long life-span as virtue, wealth and enjoyment and wellbeing on the contrary in abnormal state they give rise to severe abnormalities.<sup>[21]</sup>

**Table 1: Relation with Bala and Dosha Karma<sup>[22]</sup>**

Dosha	Karma
Vata	<i>Bala</i> – It is one of the main Karma of <i>Kapha</i> . Hence the name <i>Bala</i> . It is the seat of <i>Prakrita Ojas</i> .
Pitta	It is the <i>Sthana</i> of <i>Agni</i> . Thus, involved in <i>Bala</i> Physiology. <i>Pachaka Pitta</i> is important for the proper functioning of the other types of <i>Pitta</i> .
Kapha	Imbalanced <i>Vata</i> Dosha destroys <i>Bala</i> . <i>Udana Vayu</i> is responsible for the function of <i>Bala</i> in the body also while praising the <i>Vata</i> Dosha, <i>Acharya Charak</i> has termed it as <i>Bala</i> .

*Bala* as *Aarogya Lakshana*: *Balavridddhi* has been referred to by the *Acharya* as *Lakshana* of *Karya* or *Dhatu Samya*. Physically and psychologically, *Balavana Vyakti* is regarded as being in good health.<sup>[23]</sup>

*Bala Parikshan* and *Vyadhi Nidana*: Ayurveda has given equal importance to both *Nidana Parikshan* i.e. Diagnosis and *Chikitsa* i.e., Treatment of Diseases.

*Acharya* mentions that one who treats the diseases directly without proper diagnosis is likely to be unsuccessful in his task.

Hence proper knowledge of attributes of *vyadhi* and *aatur* with previously mentioned *dashavidha parikshya bhav* is must understood before treatment. *Daurbalya* or lack of *Bala* is mentioned as important symptom in many diseases and plays a key role in prognosis of diseases.<sup>[24]</sup>

#### **Balardha lakshana :**

- It is told that *bala* should be examined through *vyayamshakti*. But up to what extent one should perform *vyayama* is not mentioned. So here the reference of *samyak vyayama lakshana* and *balardha lakshana* or *ardha vyayamshakti* can be adopted.
- After appearance of these symptoms one should stop performing the *vyayama*. The *lakshana* are appearance of sweat over forehead, axillary region, nose, hands, foot, joints and *mukhashodhana*, increased respiratory rate, lightness of the body, increased heart rate.<sup>[25] [26]</sup>

Methods available in modern science at present day are:<sup>[27]</sup>

#### **Harvard step test:**

- The individual should step up and down off a gym bench for 5 minutes at a rate 30 steps/minute.
- The pulse is measured every one minute after finishing the test. Pulse1, pulse 2 and pulse 3 are recorded and it is calculated in this formula.
- Result =  $30000 \div (\text{pulse1} + \text{pulse2} + \text{pulse3})$

#### **Handgrip strength test:**

- The individual holds the handgrip dynamometer in the hand, with the arm at right angles and the elbow by the side of the body.
- Squeeze the dynamometer with maximum isometric effort, which is maintained for about 5 seconds. Result is recorded in kilograms.
- Push up Test: To do this, the individual should kneel on the floor, hands on either side of the chest and keep the back straight. Do as many pushups as possible until exhaustion.
- The total number of pushups performed is counted.

#### **Bruce Protocol Stress Test:**

- The individual is made to run on a treadmill. At three minute intervals the incline of the treadmill increases by 2% and the speed increases.
- The test score is the time taken on the test, in minutes.

#### **Clinical implication:**

- For *balavana rogi* the given treatment yields better result and the prognosis is good. If *rogi* is *durbala*, the treatment may not yield better results and the prognosis may be bad.
- To understand the prognosis of disease like in *rajayakshma* if patient's *bala* and *mansa* is *kshana* then the disease will turn into *asadhya* and if the *bala* and *mansa* is *kshina*, the disease is *sadhya*.
- To decide the nature and potency of the drug, assessing the *bala* is helpful.
- Administration of *tikshna virya aushadhi* to a *durbala* person leads to *sharirhani* and *hinavirya aushadhi* to a *sabala* person leads to reduced action of drug.
- The dosage of drug can be fixed on *pravara*, *madhyam* and *avara bala* respectively to avoid *upadrava*.



If *sanshodhana aushadhi* administered to a *durbala rogi*, it may lead to *ati-doshakshaya* which intern leads to *ati-daurbalya*. So assess the *bala* of patient before shodhana.

As *mano* and *sharirika bala* are *uttama* in *gurvuyadhita*, physician may get confused as *laghuvyadhita*. Similarly, *mano* and *sharirika bala* are *hina* in *laghuvyadhita*, physician may get confused as *gurvuyadhita*.

### III. DISCUSSION

- *Bala* is seen as a person's overall strength, both physically and mentally. It can be evaluated in both healthy and ill people.
- When *bala* is evaluated by *vyayamshakti*, it is referred to as *sharirika bala*. *Sattva* is regarded as *manasik bala*.
- *Vyadhikshamatva* has also been explained as *Bala* in Ayurved. *Bala* is important in providing nutrition, immunity, and support for life.
- *Desh, Kala, Linga, Vaya, Dhatusarata, Agni, and Prakruti* are all factors that *affect Bala*. The concept of *ojas* and its *karma* can be considered as *vyadhikshamatva bala*. So *bala* can be assessed in three ways i.e. physically, mentally and immunologically.
- For assessing the *mānasika bala*, *pravara, madhyam* and *avara sattva* qualities are assessed. For assessing *vyadhikshamatva bala*, the *lakshana* of *vyadhi asaha purusha, sahaja bala, kalaja bala, yuktiktaja bala* and *ojo bala* should be evaluated.
- For assessing the *sharirika bala*, different *vyayama* such as *tulabhramana, dhanura-asanaa* are explained in the texts.
- Similarly in modern aspect, different methods such as Harvard step test, Bruce protocol stress test, Push up test, Hand grip test are explained. These methods can be adapted to assess the physical strength.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Strength is a crucial bodily characteristic. It is related to *Mamsa, Asthi, Majja, & Shukra dhatu* as well as *Kapha, Vata, pitta dosha*. Strength development is *Balya karma*. *Bala* is the functional effect of *Prakrut Kapha, Oja* and *pusta dhatu*. *Bala* is defined as one who forbids *roga*, one who is *Adhistana of Arogya*, and one who receives treatment to safeguard it. In many contexts, such as *Ojas as Bala and Prakruta Kapha as Bala*, *Bala* has been described. In Ayurveda, *Bala* has also been used to explain *Vyadhikshamatva*. This *Bala* is also directly related to *Vyadhikshamatva*, which is the body's immune system and power. Due to *Bala Parikshana*, which is one of the ten most significant *Pariksha Bhavas*, disease diagnosis and treatment can be accomplished more quickly. *Bala* is clearly a multifaceted being with extensive therapeutic applications. *Bala pariksha* is an important factor for ascertaining *rogi bala*, prognosis and proper treatment. It is an important factor for assessing the fitness levels of apparently healthy persons. It can be improved by adopting proper *aahara* and *vihara*. Physician should give importance to *bala pariksha* before commencing the treatment. Different tests in modern science can be used to assess the physical strength.

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