

Dooshivisha as an Etiological Factor in the Manifestation of Kushtha Roga: A Conceptual Review

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Abstract: *Kushtha Roga is a chronic Tridoshaja disorder involving Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, and Lasika and is characterized by chronicity, recurrence, and therapeutic challenges. Ayurveda describes Dooshivisha as a cumulative, low-potency poison that remains dormant in the body and manifests disease under favorable conditions. The latent, subtle, and cumulative nature of Dooshivisha closely resembles the etiopathogenesis of Kushtha Roga. This conceptual review critically analyzes Dooshivisha as an important etiological factor in the manifestation of Kushtha based on classical Ayurvedic literature and contemporary scientific evidence. The role of Dosha-Dhatu Dushti, Rakta Pradosha, and Srotovaigunya induced by Dooshivisha is evaluated to establish its relevance in Kushtha Samprapti.*

Keywords: Dooshivisha, Kushtha Roga, Agadtantra, Rakta Dushti, Chronic Toxicity

I. INTRODUCTION

Kushtha Roga is described in Ayurveda as a Mahagada due to its chronic nature, multisystem involvement, and difficulty in management. All varieties of Kushtha are Tridoshaja, involving Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, with predominance of one or two Doshas, and primarily affect Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, and Lasika. Although the disease manifests externally on the skin, its origin lies in deep-seated Dosha-Dhatu vitiation, particularly involving Rakta Dhatu.¹

Classical texts describe several Nidanas such as Viruddha Ahara, Mithya Ahara, Diwaswapna, Vegadharana, and unethical conduct. However, the persistent and relapsing nature of Kushtha suggests the presence of latent pathological factors that remain dormant within the body for a prolonged period and manifest disease only when favorable conditions arise.²

Agadtantra introduces the concept of Dooshivisha, a weakened or attenuated form of poison that does not produce acute toxicity but remains lodged in the body and exerts cumulative pathological effects over time. This concept provides a logical framework for understanding chronic disorders such as Kushtha Roga.³

Concept of Dooshivisha

Dooshivisha is described as poison whose acute potency is reduced due to factors such as Kala (time), partial digestion, administration of antidotes, or suppression by Kapha Dosha. Although its Teekshna and Ashukari properties are diminished, it is not completely eliminated from the body and persists in an Avyakta (latent) state.⁴

Classical Ayurvedic texts mention that Dooshivisha manifests pathological effects when precipitating factors such as Ajirna, Diwaswapna, Guru-Sheetah Ahara, Vegadharana, psychological stress, and seasonal variations are present. Thus, Dooshivisha is characterized by chronicity, cumulative action, and delayed manifestation.⁵

In the contemporary context, Ayurvedic scholars have correlated Dooshivisha with cumulative exposure to environmental pollutants, food adulterants, pesticides, chemical cosmetics, industrial toxins, heavy metals, and



long-term drug usage. These agents may not cause immediate toxicity but gradually accumulate within the Dhatus and act as latent toxins.⁶⁻⁸

Kushtha Roga: Ayurvedic Perspective

Kushtha Roga involves the vitiation of Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, and Lasika along with Rasavaha, Raktavaha, and Mamsavaha Srotas. Among these, Rakta Dhatus play a pivotal role in the Samprapti of Kushtha, making it a Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara.¹

Vitiated Rakta circulating through the body produces clinical features such as Vaivarnya, Kandu, Daha, Pidaka, Srava, and chronic skin lesions. The involvement of multiple Dhatus and Srotas contributes to the complexity, chronicity, and recurrence of the disease.⁹

Etiological Correlation Between Dooshivisha and Kushtha

The latent, cumulative, and subtle nature of Dooshivisha makes it a significant underlying etiological factor in the manifestation of Kushtha Roga. Due to its Sukshma Guna, Dooshivisha penetrates deep into the Dhatus and circulates throughout the body via Rasavaha and Raktavaha Srotas, leading to chronic Dosha-Dhatus Dushti.⁴⁻⁶

Prolonged persistence of Dooshivisha predominantly vitiates Rakta Dhatus, resulting in Rakta Pradosha and Srotovaigunya. This pathological milieu facilitates the localization of vitiated Doshas in Twak, ultimately producing Kushtha Roga.¹⁰

This Ayurvedic explanation closely parallels modern toxicological concepts of bioaccumulative toxins. Chronic exposure to low-level toxins such as arsenic, pesticides, and industrial chemicals has been shown to produce delayed and persistent dermatological manifestations including hyperpigmentation, hyperkeratosis, pruritus, and chronic inflammatory dermatoses.¹¹⁻¹³

Once Khavaigunya is established in Rakta and Twak, Doshas—especially Pitta and Kapha—localize and manifest as Kushtha. The persistent presence of Dooshivisha explains the chronicity, recurrence, and incomplete therapeutic response commonly observed in Kushtha patients.⁶⁻⁹

Role of Rakta Dushti

Agadtantra identifies Rakta as the primary Dushya affected by Visha. Continuous exposure to Dooshivisha leads to chronic Rakta Dushti, resulting in inflammation, impaired tissue nutrition, altered immune responses, and cutaneous pathology.⁴

Since Kushtha Roga is predominantly a Rakta Pradoshaja disorder, Dooshivisha-induced Rakta Dushti plays a central role in its chronic and recurrent manifestation.¹⁰

II. DISCUSSION

Dooshivisha may be regarded as a hidden etiological factor responsible for the chronicity and recurrence of Kushtha Roga. Contemporary lifestyle practices such as environmental pollution, chemical cosmetics, adulterated food, occupational toxin exposure, and long-term pharmacotherapy may act as sources of latent toxic burden.^{6-8, 12}

Recognition of such latent toxicity strengthens the Agadtantra-based understanding of chronic skin disorders and emphasizes the need for etiological identification in addition to symptomatic management.

III. CONCLUSION

Dooshivisha plays a significant role as a latent, cumulative, and chronic etiological factor in the manifestation of Kushtha Roga. Its ability to vitiate Rakta Dhatus and produce sustained Dosha-Dhatus Dushti closely parallels the chronic disease process of Kushtha. Understanding Kushtha through the concept of Dooshivisha broadens etiological insight and provides a strong conceptual basis for interpreting chronic dermatological disorders.

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