

## A REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF DISHA AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN AYURVEDA

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is perceived as one of the most ancient and well documented system of medicine equally relevant in modern times. In Ayurveda different ideas are collected, evaluated and compiled to create vast approach towards human well-being. Everyone knows that there is no effect without cause, So in Ayurveda the concept of Karya-Karana is accepted as root of every phenomena occurring in the body as well as in the universe. Karana has been given due importance to acquire health or to conquer the disease. Disha is one of the Karana Dravya and is as important as Desha in Ayurveda. One can find direct or indirect application of Disha in every field of Ayurveda like in Dravyaguna, Swasthviritta, Sharir Kriya etc. Even today people are applying this in so many ways for their day to day routines. From sleep to awakening and from birth to death people are utilizing the knowledge of directions. Vastushastra and Jyotishshastra is also a great science which is based on the utilization of this knowledge for giving health, wealth and progress to the society. By applying this concept of Disha they can have idea of the effects of planets on human body and mind. Even the modern Science is also very much aware from the concept of direction and in so many theories they are using this concept as backbone. The general and specific theory of relativity of Einstein, the effect of electromagnetic field of earth and planet, the effect of gravity and the Global Orientation System depends on the concept of Disha or geographical directions. The concept of Disha is found Scattered in literature in Ayurveda. So effort is made to compile the knowledge of Disha so that it should be applied for bettering the human life.

**KEYWORDS:** Karana, Disha, direction, Dravyaguna.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is perceived as one of the most ancient and well documented system of medicine equally relevant in modern times. In Ayurveda different ideas are collected, evaluated and compiled to create vast approach towards human well-being. Everyone knows that there is no effect without cause, So in Ayurveda the concept of Karya-Karana is accepted as root of every phenomena occurring in the body as well as in the universe. The concept of Karana Dravya has its origin in Darshanashastra and it has some modification in terms of Chikitsa. Among nine Karana Dravya, Dik (Disha) is also known as Karana Dravya. Dik literary means direction, a region or part of a region, a quarter of the earth, to show or to exhibit. Thus here Dik has Disha (geographical) meaning. This meaning has their own importance in different context. According to Charak "Adhyayana, Adhyapana and Tadviya Sambhashanama" are the tools to learn the Tantra<sup>[1]</sup> and "Shastra pariksha" i.e. is examination of text before going to learn it and apply it. In this way to know the applicability of the

Disha concept, it is needed to know the literary aspect in classics.

**Derivation (Vyutpati)**

Word "Dish" means direction by applying the Sutra "ritwaj dhdrishtraj iti kvin" and Nipatana is taking place in the formation of word "dish" Then by applying "taap" Pratyaya to the dish the word disha is derived.

Root "dik" that means to show or indicate. It is an Ubhayapadi Dhatu belonging from the sixth Gana of Paniniya Ashtadhyayee called Tudadi Gana.

**Etymology (Nirukati)**

The particular causative factor which provides the space is termed as Disha. (Amarkosha)

**Synonym (Paryaya)**

- According to shabdratnavali: Nirdeshani, Disha, Kakubh, harita, Gou.

- **According to Amarkosha:** Kakubha, Kastha, Aasha, Harita.

### Defination (Paribhasha)

Ayurved has accepted Disha as a Karana Dravya and that the only reference is found. So in Ayurveda moola samhitas no direct reference is found about the definition of the Disha in Samhitas. The concept is mainly derived from the Darshanas where the Disha has been accepted as Padartha as well as Karana Dravya too. Various Darshanas have defined the Disha in different way. Some have given importance to its Swaroop whereas some have given importance to its usage etc.

According to Vaisheshika darshana sutra sthana 2/10, Disha is understood to arise out of our motions; of here and there, up and down, front and back, right and left. The Tarka samgraha has said that Disha is one but for usage it is divided into east west etc. According to Vachaspatyam Disha is defined for the practical use to know the direction of the thing or region in relation to some fixed subject. Shabdakalpadruma have same description for word Disha. In Ayurveda Some commentators had put light on word Disha. By observing the definition given by Acharaya Yogindernath Sen and Acharya Gangadhara, one can say that the Ayurveda has kept the scope of Disha for the Vyavahara to locate things in body as well as in the universe surrounds us. Thus Disha is the Karana to locate or to indicate the object with relation to something. It is a factor that is omnipresent (Vibhu) and eternal (Nitya) having various types according to its utility in locating the objects with the relation to some fixed things and for defining the movements of the object. Disha is decided by the movements of sun.

### Disha

In Karana Dravyas there are two categories. One are Murta Dravyas like Vayu, Agni, Jala, Pruthvi, Mana and rest are Amurta Dravyas like Aakasha, Atma, Kala and Disha. These Murta and Amurta Dravyas are the Karana of every Sendriya and Nirindriya Dravyas. Among them Panchamahabhoota are forming Nirindriya Dravyas while Panchmahabhoota with Mana and Atma are forming Sendriya Dravyas i.e. Chetan Srishti. While Kala and Disha are the Karana of all Sendriya and Nirindriya Dravya and are the unavoidable causes.

The nine Karana Dravyas are always individually playing some role in the formation of Karya Dravyas. Like Pruthvi gives Kharatva, Ghanatva (solid base structure), Jala gives Dravtva etc. Atma is Nimitta Karana of Sendriya Dravyas. Kala is Nitya (eternal) and Vibhu (sarvagata) means it is unavoidable cause which gives Kala Prakarsha to facilitate all the procedure being in time. Disha is always being in doubt because it itself is not clear that what is Disha? Is it Dravya or Guna or any kind of Padartha? And why it is accepted as Karana Dravyas? Is there any need to take Disha as Karana Dravya or even Dravya? The evolution of Disha is also

supported by the Akhyayika given in Varaha Purana. According to Tarka samgraha disha is always one. In Charaka Samhita Paradi gunas having the concept of Disha in form of Para and Aparas because this type of knowledge of near and far is due to Disha. Terminology of Urdhva, Adho and Tiryak is also suggestive of the three type of Disha. There are mainly Four types East (Purva), West (Paschima), North (Uttara) and South (Dakshina) of Disha. But Disha can also be classified in 8 if one include the Kona in it i.e. Purva, Paschima, Uttara, Dakshina, Ishana, Vayavya, Nairutya and Agni. Most of the text Disha is accepted 10 in number like above 8 and Urdhva and Adho Disha. Ayurveda is applying Disha for its external applicability to locate the position of Dravya with relation to Desha i.e. Deshik Paratva Apartva and the effect of Disha is also accepted on the Dravyas. Moreover Ayurveda deals with the body which is also accepted as Desha and Disha is also indicating the organs or some physiological phenomena (like the movements of Dhatu) within the body. Like Doshagati is said to be Urdhva, Adho and Tiryak. Yakrit is said to be in the Dakshina parshva of the body.

### Concept of disha in dravyaguna

Dravyaguna deals knowledge of nomenclature (namajnana), pharmacognosy (rupajnana), pharmacology (gunajnana) and pharmacotherapeutics (yuktijnana). The main focus of the branch is limited to herbs and are studied in its all the aspects from the collection methods to the assessments of their qualities. Here the concept of Disha is applied in many ways like nomenclature, collection method, preservation method, regional indication of Dravyas, understanding some of the Gunas. The references regarding these are as follow:

**Nomenclature:** Ayurveda has developed its Pharmacognosy in the form of the Nomenclature. The synonyms of the plant is always indicating the different aspects like identification characteristic, specific property, specific location/region, specific usage of that particular plant. Here the concept of Disha is found in the application of describing the identification characteristic of the plant like Apamarga is named as Adhahashalya which is indicating the direction of the flowers or thorns that means the plant having the thorn facing towards the downward direction. The classification of the plant Kingdom is also having the nomenclature according to Disha like Viruddha means the climbers which climbs opposite direction from the force of gravity or upwards.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Collection method:** Acharyas have described the proper collection method of the various plants to achieve the maximum quality of the herbs as medicine. They very well aware of the relation between the plant parts and the season as well as the region (Desha) of that plant. So they developed the collection method keeping these phenomena in mind. The concept of Disha is applied in two ways: One who wants to collect the plant should face towards Uttara or Purva Disha as described in

Charaka Samhita. Ayurveda suggested Udechi Disha of plant to be having much quality as compared to other part of plant. That means the part of a plant developed in Northern direction is believed to be the best in terms of therapeutic properties. There may be some metaphysical law of quantum theory behind this suggestion. Because science believes that every quantum has its own direction of development and vibration. It may be possible that due to some natural forces, the atom of that particular plant part would be having some more charged particles or active ingredient as compare to others.<sup>[3,4]</sup>

**Specific property:** To get specific property like in Punsawana purpose the Vatashruna of Uttara or Purva Disha of the banyan tree should be collect. Acharya Vagbhatt described the method of the collection the root from the Uttara disha for the use of Kshara Nirmana. Shusruta said that Sheeta/ Saumya Dravyas should be collected in Sheet Kala (Dakshinayana) and Agneya/ Ushana Dravyas in Agneya Kala. So the north direction might be having this property because Uutarayana or north is called Aadan or Agneya Kala.

**Preservation method of Drug:** After the collection of fresh herb, it should be preserved by various processes and stored in a specialized store room. That store room must face the doors towards South or West directions. So it is to avoid direct sunlight and wind. Acharya Sushruta suggest the location of Bheshajagara should be at eastern or northern direction with relation to city area.<sup>[5,6]</sup>

**Regional Dravyas:** Desha Pareeksha is among ten examination factors of Charaka Vimana. Ayurveda has unique concept of Satmya. One of the types of this Satmya is Desha Satmya. The diseases commonly occurs at that particular Desha are having their drug of choice at the same Desha. In Desha, Disha is applied to indicate those region of drugs. References regarding these are found in so many texts as follow: Tuvarka is good from western sea shore.<sup>[7]</sup> Tamalaki, Kadali, Vacha, Jivanti etc are said to be famous in western part of country as described by Dalhana.<sup>[8]</sup> Haimvata is a regional indication given to the Dravyas found in Northern region and Dakshina Pathga to Southern region of India.<sup>[9]</sup> Aswakarna is the tree which has vegetation over western part of the county.<sup>[10,11]</sup> Salt is having two different regional origin with reference to Disha. Southern and western sea shores are respetevly producing the Karakaja and Panshujam kind of salt. The bittle nut of southern India is cinsider as good to use by Bhavaprakasha. Pilu is the fruit found at northern India.<sup>[12]</sup> In Rasayana use charaka described the term Paschima for indication of time.<sup>[13]</sup>

#### Concept of disha in rasashastra

Rasa shastra is the branch developed by time to achieve two goals Deha Siddhi and Loha siddhi. In Rasa shastra the Rasa poojana and the Rasa Karma should be perform in the place called Rasa Shala. Here Rasashala is a specific kind of building designed to do the procedure on

perfect way. The construction of Rasa Shala is based on the application of the concept of Disha.

- The Rasashala should be built outside the town at the direction of Uttaraa or Ishanya or Purva in relation to town.
- Even in the Rasashala the following conducts of the direction should be followed for the different Karma:

**Table No.-1.**<sup>[14]</sup>

Disha	Karma
Purva	Rasa bhairava or Rasalinga Sthapana
Paschima	Kshalanakarma
Uttaraa	Vedhakarma
Dakshina	Pashanakarma
Agneya	Vahnikarma
Vayavya	Shashanakarma
Nairitya	Shastrakarma
Ishana	Siddhavastu sthapanam

#### Concept of disha in roga nidana

Taila Bindu Pariksha of Mutra is one of the objective diagnostic methods which is the example of the concept in the field of Roga Nidana. Here Disha is applied to give objectivity in the urine examination of patient. Yogaratnakara described the method for predicting the prognosis of the disease. In this examination the urine of the patient is taken as a sample. The specially designed vessel is prepared where the marking of Disha has done like Purva, Pshchima etc. The vessel is filled with the early morning sample of urine. The drop of oil is dropped in the urine. Now the prediction depends on the method of spreading the oil drop in particular Disha as listed below:

**Table No.-2.**<sup>[15]</sup>

Disha of Tailbindu	Prediction
Purva	Immediate recovery
Pashchima	Health with prosperity
Uttara	Definite relief
Dakshina	Slow relief leads to health
Angi or Nairutya	Definite death
Vayavya	Definite death
Ishana	Sure death within a month

#### Concept of disha in swasthvritta

- 1) The passing out natural urges is decided by Disha.<sup>[16]</sup> While passing the urges one should face Northward during daytime and Southward during night-time. In Bhelsamhita sutrasthana 6/9 same is described.
- 2) The direction of one's eating should be Eastwards or South ward.<sup>[17]</sup> Moreover Acharya Sushruta suggested the Disha of serving the food in specific manner with relation to Deha Desha Disha. Like Khanda, Yoosh types of liquid diet should place at left side of a person who is eating.<sup>[18]</sup>

- 3) Study of Veda should not perform at the time of Dig Daha according to Charaka. Acharya Charaka is suggesting the Prangmukha Disha i.e. facing towards east direction while doing Adhayana. The Jgnakarma to be perform at Prak pravana or Udak Pravana means the land or platform slightly sloped towards west or south.<sup>[19]</sup>

### Concept of disha in shalya

Ayurveda is the rich science having so many kinds of treatments modalities. Panchakarma, Shalyakarma, Shalyapanayana karma are some of them. Here the concept of Disha is applied to assure the best results of that particular procedure.

Acharya Sushruta is the pioneer of the surgery. Acharya minutely applied the concept of Disha in the surgical procedure. During surgery the patient should be kept in the position of facing toward east direction (Prangamukha) and surgeon should stand at westward direction i.e. Prtyang Mukha. The meaning of Pratyanga mukha is Prti meant opposite to Prak i.e. opposite to east means west. Here Anuloma Shastra is also indicative of Deha Disha.<sup>[20,21]</sup> Post operative procedure here it is suggested that the patient must sleep keeping the head towards eastward direction. The reason is also given by Acharya Sushruta that Deities are said to be situated in the Purva Disha. So patient's head should be kept in the eastern direction for worshipping the deities.<sup>[22]</sup>

Angikarma is the procedure of cauterization of specific part of the body for getting desired effect. Here patient's head should be kept at eastward. In Ksharakarma the same indication is suggested regarding Disha.<sup>[23,24]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

All most all the streams of ancient sciences and current sciences are applying the concept of Disha in one or another way directly or indirectly. Ayurveda, Darshana, Jyotisha, Vastushastra these all allied sciences having their own understanding and explanation regarding Disha on the basis of their goals and usages. Its need, importance and utility in all the field of Ayurveda have been established. The conceptual study paves the way for the applied study. A concept well understood has to be evaluated practically in the form of the applied study for well-being of human-being.

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