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## Clinical Application of *Shat Kriya Kala* – A Review Article

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### ABSTRACT

The art of understanding a disease and its stages of pathogenesis was probably explained for the first time in *Shat Kriya Kala* in a very comprehensive way. *Shat Kriya Kala* means ‘appropriate’ time periods to take action or plan of treatment. So by knowing the *Shat Kriya Kala* one can diagnose or manage the disease in earlier stage without causing any delay. As *Acharyas* had described various do’s and don’ts such as *Ritucharya*, *Dincharya*, *Aharavidhi*, *Sadvritta* etc. in detail. Beside this *Panchkarma* procedures are mentioned for preventive and curative purposes.

### KEYWORDS

*Ayurveda*, *Shat Kriya Kala*, *Hetu*, *Ritucharya*, *Panchkarma*



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## INTRODUCTION

The early diagnosis of diseases is well explained in *Ayurvedic* classics in the terms of *Shat Kriya Kala*. A unique concept described by *Sushruta* gives an idea about the consecutive stages of the disease and accordingly preventive measures were described to overcome complication. *Shat Kriya Kala* means six stages of progress of a disease, as mentioned in Table no.1. It is a compound expression, comprised of *Kriya* and *Kala*, where *Kriya* means the choice to treatment (medicine, food and daily routine) used to improve the disturbance in *Doshas* and *Kala* refers to the stage of progress of a disease. In short *Kriya Kala* refers to the recognition of the stage of a disease's process, which helps to determine appropriate measure to correct the imbalance in *Doshas* (biological factors).

**Table.1** *Shat Kriya Kala*<sup>2</sup>

Sr.No.	<i>Kriya kala</i>	Stages
1.	<i>Sanchaya</i>	Stage of accumulation of <i>Dosha</i> 's in their own sites.
2.	<i>Prakopa</i>	Stage of aggravation or exacerbation of <i>Dosha</i> 's at their own sites.
3.	<i>Prasara</i>	Stage of liquefaction and spreading of <i>Dosha</i> 's overflow and spread all through the body.
4.	<i>Sthana Samshraya</i>	Stage of premonitory symptoms.
5.	<i>Vyakta</i>	Stage of manifestation of disease.
6.	<i>Bheda</i>	Stage of complication.

In context of *Kala*, according to *Acharya Charaka*, there are two types of *Kala* i.e. *Aadan Kala* and *Visarga Kala*. In *Ritucharya Adhyaya* there are six *Ritus* (seasons) mentioned, out of which three are of *Aadan Kala* i.e. *Shishira*, *Vasanta*, *Grishma* and three are of *Visarga Kala* i.e. *Varsha*, *Sharada* and *Hemanta*.<sup>3</sup>

*Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* have explained three stages of *Dosha* vitiation in correlation of seasonal changes Table No.2.

**Table 2** *Awastha* of *Dosha*'s in particular season<sup>4</sup>

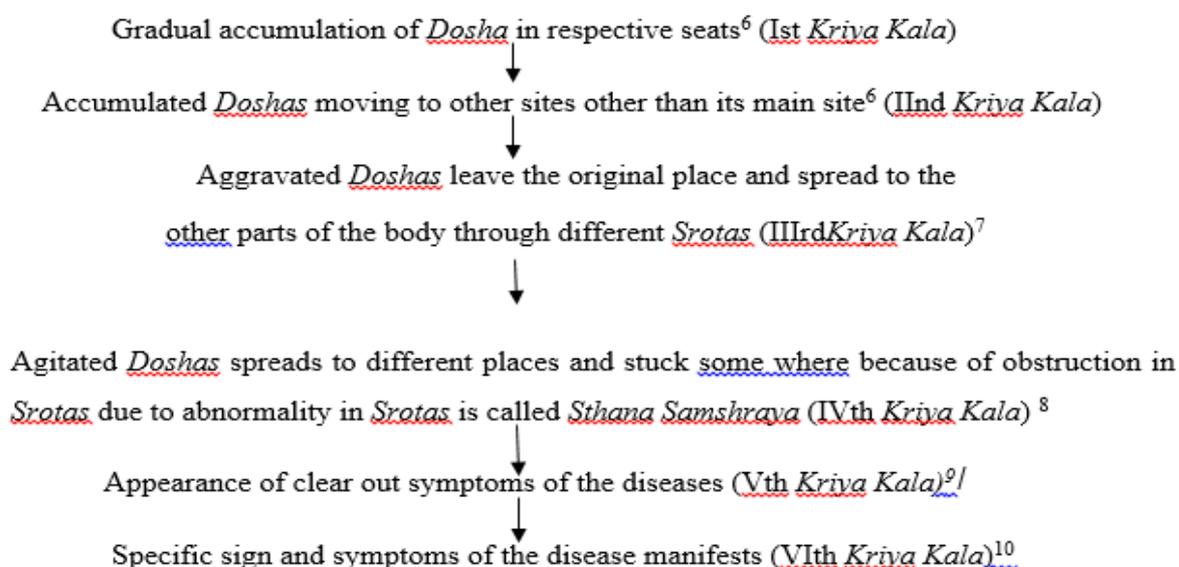
<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Sanchaya</i>	<i>Prakopa</i>	<i>Prashamana</i>
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Grishma ritu</i>	<i>Varsha ritu</i>	<i>Sharada ritu</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Varsha</i>	<i>Sharada</i>	<i>Hemanta</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Shishira</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Grishma</i>

It is also mentioned that one should do seasonal *Panchkarma* procedure for elimination of vitiated *Dosha*'s as mentioned in Table No.3. *Panchkarma* therapy is one of the important branches of *Ayurveda* which deals with purification of the provoked *Doshas* from the body.

**Table 3** Seasonal *Panchkarma* Procedures<sup>5</sup>

<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Niharan kala of Dosha</i>	<i>Panchkarma procedure</i>
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Varsha</i>	<i>Vasti</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Sharada</i>	<i>Virechan</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Vaman</i>

But if one does not follow the dos and don'ts according to the season then there will be manifestation of disease at gradual levels as shown in flow chart.



These three stages of pathogenesis are easy to treat because the tissues or organ damage has not yet occurred. The later stages of the disease wherein the vitiated *Dosha*'s not diagnosed and managed in their earlier stages of vitiation i.e. *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prasaraget* even more aggressive and invade the tissues and the events which follow the invasion are difficult to manage. When the morbid *Dosha*'s invade the *Dhatu*s the *Doshas* get lodged therein. The contact of morbid *Doshas* and susceptible *Dhatu*s gives rise to premonitory symptoms (*Purvarupa*) of the diseases. If the disease is not managed at this stage, the *Doshas* further damage the *Dhatu*s. Now the disease gets clearly manifested with its clear out signs and symptoms (*Rupas or Lakshanas*). If the disease is not even treated at this stage, it leads to manifestation of complication wherein the disease gets out of reach of *Kala* and

comprises of three stages. These three stages of the disease are different to handle with the context of treatment. In these three stages, the tissue damage, signs and symptoms of the disease and complication would have manifested making the clinical picture of the disease different and hard to handle.

### **IMPORTANT STEPS TO APPLY SHAT KRIYA KALA IN TODAY'S LIFESTYLE**

- *Shat Kriya Kala* is helpful not only understanding a disease and making an accurate diagnosis, but also to have a minute track of each and every stage of pathogenesis of a disease. It is must for any medical science if it is aiming at both preventive and curative aspects of a disease management. It is time to take charge of your health!
- Primordial prevention measures that inhibit the emergence of environment,



economic, social and behavioural conditions should be followed in the first phase of *Kriya Kala*.

- *Ritu* the season, classified by different features expresses different effects on the body as well as the environment. With change in season, the change is very evident in the environment we live in. We see various changes in bio-life around us, such as flowering in spring and leaf shedding in autumn in the plants, hibernation of many animals with coming of winter and so on. As human being is also part of same ecology, the body is greatly influenced by external environment.

- So, when a particular type of season changed an individual should change his/her lifestyle and diet to suit the particular season. The change must be gradual over a period of 15 days, slowly try to give up the initial lifestyle and adopt new one. If the subtle changes occurring in the body (after getting exposed to causative factors) i.e. the initial stages of pathogenesis can be found at the earliest), we would have terminated an illness before it has even thought of manifesting. This helps in avoiding unnecessary medication, want of aggressive treatment approaches, undue waste time, bothering stress for self and care takes.

- Primary prevention should be taken in second and third stage of *KriyaKala*. It reduces the incidence of disease by protecting the health by personal and community efforts such as enhancing nutritional status, providing immunization and eliminating environmental risks.

- Some ones age, health, lifestyle choices (i.e. what we eat, how active you are) and other important factors impact the health. Being healthy is much about eating right and exercising as it is about getting screened by a health care professional regularly. The diet should be planned according to the age, season and habitat. The proper use of diet not only prevents the disease but also plays major role in the management of the disease.

- Secondary prevention measures are available to the individuals and communities for early detection and prompt intervention to control the disease and minimize disability. All this preventive measures should be followed in fourth phase of *Kriya Kala*.

- Being *Ayurvedacharya*, it is the high time to focus on providing door to door health awareness to live a healthy lifestyle and to avoid the disease progression. So that *Proyajan* of the *Ayurveda* to be fulfilled. As by getting the right health services, screenings and treatment chances for living



a longer and healthier life increases. Regular health checkups are a part of one's fitness routine. It has been told over and over again by doctors that one needs to have regular medical checkups to keep track of their health. Regular health exams and tests can help find problems before they start. They also can help find problems early, when your chances for treatment and cure are better. This makes it crucial that one gets a regular health check up to ensure that you are not missing out on identifying any life-threatening diseases.

- Screening tests are must be done in people before any symptoms become noticeable. This has the advantage of being able to treat the disease much earlier. However, treating a disease at an early stage only makes sense if it leads to a better health outcome than treating it at a later stage. Cancer that's diagnosed at an early stage, when it isn't too large and has not spread, is more likely to be treated successfully. If cancer spreads, effective treatment becomes more difficult and generally a person's chances of surviving are much lower.

- How happy would be all if a doctor just advises diet and lifestyle corrections without prescribing any medicines when we approach him or her an illness or sickness which we have to be of serious form. To

improve awareness and access to care, a coordinated approach should be developed that includes empowerment and engagement linked to integrated, people-centred service at all levels of care.



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