



ROLE OF DOSHAS IN NETRAROGA: AN AYURVEDIC AND MODERN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract : *Background: The eye (Netra) is regarded as the most important of the sense organs in Ayurveda, described as Sarvendriyāṇām Nayanam Pradhānam (Su. Su. 1/18) [1]. Classical texts such as Suśruta Saṁhitā and Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya describe 76 varieties of Netraroga (ocular diseases), each rooted in the imbalance of Tridoṣa—Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha.*

Objective: To analyze the role of Doṣas in the pathogenesis of Netraroga and correlate classical concepts with modern ophthalmology.

Methods: A literary review of Caraka Saṁhitā, Suśruta Saṁhitā, Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya, and their commentaries was undertaken. Classical descriptions were compared with modern ophthalmological conditions for conceptual correlation.

Results: Classical texts classify Netraroga into Vātajā, Pittajā, Kaphajā, Raktajā, and Sannipātajā types. Vātajā disorders manifest with dryness and pain, corresponding to neurogenic or degenerative ocular conditions. Pittajā disorders show redness and burning, comparable to inflammatory conditions. Kaphajā disorders exhibit heaviness and stickiness, correlating with allergic or obstructive states. Raktajā and Sannipātajā forms indicate vascular and complex systemic involvement.

Conclusion: The role of Doṣas in Netraroga provides diagnostic and therapeutic guidance. Comparative analysis highlights the continued relevance of Ayurvedic principles in modern ophthalmology, particularly in prevention and holistic care.

Keywords: Netraroga, Doṣa, Tridoṣa, Ayurveda, Ophthalmology, Śālākya Tantra

I. INTRODUCTION

Vision (Darśana) is considered the most vital of the sensory functions. Ayurveda regards the eye as the pradhāna indriya ('chief sense organ'), indispensable for perceiving the external world. As stated, Sarvendriyāṇām Nayanam Pradhānam (Su. Su. 1/18) [1].

Śālākya Tantra deals with disorders of the eye, ear, nose, throat, and head. Among these, Suśruta describes 76 types of Netraroga (Su. Uttara Tantra 1/18) [1]. The theoretical foundation lies in the doctrine of Tridoṣa. In equilibrium, Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha sustain bodily integrity; in disequilibrium, they produce disease (vyādhi).

A doṣa-based perspective aids in diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy. For example, Pittajā disorders warrant śītala (cooling) and rakta-śodhana (blood purification) therapies, while Vātajā disorders require sneha (unctuous therapy) and śamana (pacification of dryness) [2].

In modern practice, ocular disorders are rising due to screen exposure, pollution, and systemic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension [7]. While modern ophthalmology emphasizes surgical and pharmacological advances, Ayurveda offers individualized and holistic care. This study aims to examine the role of Doṣas in Netraroga and integrate classical insights with modern ophthalmology.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A conceptual review was conducted using primary sources: Caraka Saṃhitā [2], Suśruta Saṃhitā [1], Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya [3], and supporting commentaries [4–6]. Modern ophthalmology texts [7–9] and selected articles [10–11] were reviewed for comparison.

Doṣa-specific symptoms of Netraroga were extracted, categorized into Vātaja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Raktaja, and Sannipātaja types, and correlated with modern disease groups.

III. RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Classical Classification

Suśruta classifies 76 Netraroga anatomically:

- Vartma (eyelids) – 11 diseases
- Śukla (sclera) – 13 diseases
- Śyāva/black part (cornea/iris) – 25 diseases
- Dṛṣṭi (vision centre/pupil) – 17 diseases
- Sarvanayana (whole eye) – 10 diseases [1]

Doṣa-wise features and modern correlation

- Vātaja: dryness, pain, twitching → dry eye, optic atrophy [10].
- Pittaja: redness, burning, discharge → conjunctivitis, keratitis, uveitis [11].
- Kaphaja: heaviness, stickiness, blurred vision → allergic conjunctivitis, early cataract [7].
- Raktaja: vascular congestion, hemorrhage → retinopathies [12].
- Sannipātaja: mixed, severe, poor prognosis → glaucoma, autoimmune eye disease [8].

IV. DISCUSSION

Doṣa-Duṣya Sammūrchana

Ocular pathology occurs through the interplay of aggravated doṣas with duṣyas—notably Rasa, Rakta, Māmsa, and Majjā dhātus [2].

Eye as Tejas-Dominant Indriya

The eye is primarily tejas-dominant, governed by Alochaka Pitta. Disturbance of Pitta is central to many ocular pathologies [3].

Nidāna and Modern Risk Factors

Ayurvedic causative factors like asātmendriyārtha saṃyoga (improper use of senses), rātri jāgaraṇa (night vigil), and āhāra-doṣa (dietary errors) correspond to digital strain, circadian disruption, and poor nutrition [7].

Comparative Doṣa–Modern Pathology Mapping

- Vātaja ↔ neurogenic, degenerative eye disorders.
- Pittaja ↔ inflammatory/infective ocular diseases.
- Kaphaja ↔ allergic/obstructive conditions.
- Raktaja ↔ vascular eye diseases.
- Sannipātaja ↔ systemic/multi-factorial eye disorders [7–9].

Therapeutic Framework

- Pañcakarma: Virecana, Nasya, Raktamokṣaṇa.
- Kriyākalpa: Tarpana, Putapāka, Aścyotana, Bidālaka.
- Internal aushadhi: Triphala ghṛta, Tikta rasa drugs.
- Lifestyle: diet regulation, avoidance of overstrain, Trataka (yogic gaze practice).

Preventive Perspective

Nidāna parivarjana (avoidance of causative factors), ṛtucarya (seasonal regimen), and rasāyana therapies provide preventive eye care, paralleling modern emphasis on lifestyle and nutrition [9].

V. CONCLUSION

The Ayurvedic framework of Netraroga rooted in Tridoṣa remains clinically relevant. Classical features align with modern pathological categories, and therapeutic strategies correspond to modern treatment goals. Doṣa-centric analysis enriches both diagnostic and therapeutic domains in ophthalmology. Integration of classical and modern insights offers a comprehensive approach to eye health.

VI. REFERENCES

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