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Dosha-Awastha in Ayurveda and Its Correlation with The Biological Clock

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Abstract:

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes the dynamic interplay of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha Doshas in maintaining health and well-being. These Doshas follow distinct rhythmic cycles, influenced by biological clocks, including circadian, ultradian, and infradian rhythms. The Dosha-Awastha (state of Doshas) varies with the time of day, seasonal changes, and life stages, directly impacting physiological functions. Modern chronobiology has highlighted the significance of these biological rhythms, correlating them with the Ayurvedic concept of Dinacharya (daily regimen) and Rutucharya (seasonal regimen) to optimize health. This article explores the correlation between Dosha cycles and biological rhythms, highlighting their role in digestion, metabolism, and disease prevention. Disruptions in these rhythms due to altered diet, irregular sleep patterns, or modern lifestyle changes-lead to Dosha imbalances, contributing to the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. Ayurvedic principles provide preventive measures by aligning daily routines with natural cycles, helping to restore biological equilibrium. The integration of Ayurvedic wisdom with modern chronobiology presents a promising approach for improving public health. By understanding the rhythmic variations of Doshas and their role in physiological regulation, healthcare strategies can be redefined to promote holistic well-being and disease prevention.

Keywords: Tridosha, Biological rhythms, Circadian cycle, Dinacharya, Rutucharya etc.

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INTRODUCTION:

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance among the three fundamental physiological principles—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—referred to as Doshas. The concept of Dosha-Awastha (the state of Doshas) is central to understanding human physiology and pathology in Ayurveda. The equilibrium of these Doshas ensures health, while their imbalance leads to disease.

Modern chronobiology has unveiled the significance of the biological clock, which governs various physiological processes in the human body. This clock regulates bodily functions based on rhythmic cycles such as circadian, ultradian, and infradian rhythms. Ayurveda, through its principles of Dinacharya (daily regimen) and Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), provides insights into maintaining synchronization between Dosha cycles and the biological clock. This article aims to explore the correlation between Dosha-Awastha and biological rhythms, highlighting its relevance to human health.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the concept of biological rhythms and doshas from an Ayurvedic perspective.
2. To analyze variations of Doshas in relation to different times of the day, night, and seasonal transitions.

Review of Literature:

Each individual has a unique combination of these Doshas, known as Prakriti, which determines their physical and mental constitution. Maintaining balance among the Doshas through diet, lifestyle, and herbal remedies is essential for optimal health in Ayurveda. In Ayurveda, Doshas are the fundamental bio-energies that govern physiological and psychological functions in the body. They are derived from the five

elements (Panchamahabhutas)—Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether—and are responsible for maintaining health and balance in an individual. The three Doshas are Vata, Pitta, and Kapha.

1. Vata Dosha:**Characteristics:**

- Governs movement, communication, and circulation.
- Light, dry, cold, rough, mobile, subtle, irregular, and clear in nature.

Physiological Functions:

- Controls bodily movements, including respiration, circulation, nerve impulses, and peristalsis.
- Influences creativity, enthusiasm, and mental agility.
- Regulates elimination (excretion and urination).

Variations & Imbalances:

- **Balanced State (Samya Avastha):** Proper digestion, sound sleep, mental clarity, and agile body movements.
- **Increased State (Vridhhi Avastha):** Dry skin, constipation, anxiety, restlessness, insomnia, joint pain, and tremors.
- **Decreased State (Kshaya Avastha):** Weak digestion, fatigue, lack of enthusiasm, and poor circulation.

2. Pitta Dosha:**Characteristics:**

- Governs metabolism, digestion, and transformation.
- Hot, sharp, light, oily, liquid, spreading, and slightly pungent in nature.

Physiological Functions:

- Regulates digestion, metabolism, and energy production.

- Controls body temperature and hormonal functions.
- Influences intelligence, courage, and decision-making abilities.

Variations & Imbalances:

1. **Balanced State:** Healthy digestion, good eyesight, balanced emotions, sharp intellect.
2. **Increased State:** Acid reflux, skin rashes, irritability, excessive hunger, inflammation, and fever.
3. **Decreased State:** Weak digestion, cold intolerance, pale skin, and poor concentration.

3. Kapha Dosha

Characteristics:

- Governs structure, stability, and lubrication.
- Heavy, slow, cool, oily, smooth, dense, stable, and sticky in nature.

Physiological Functions:

- Provides physical strength and immunity.
- Lubricates joints and maintains body moisture.
- Promotes emotional calmness, patience, and stability.

Variations & Imbalances:

- **Balanced State:** Strong immunity, stable emotions, endurance, and deep sleep.
- **Increased State:** Weight gain, sluggish digestion, excessive sleep, congestion, and lethargy.
- **Decreased State:** Dry skin, weakness, emotional instability, and lack of endurance.

Ayurvedic Perspective on Dosha-Awastha:

The Tridosha—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—follow a cyclic pattern influenced by age, time of day, seasons, and digestion stages:

- **Kapha predominates** during the early morning (6 AM–10 AM) and early night (6 PM–10 PM).

- **Pitta dominates** midday (10 AM–2 PM) and midnight (10 PM–2 AM).
- **Vata is active** in the late afternoon (2 PM–6 PM) and late night (2 AM–6 AM). This diurnal pattern is also evident in digestion:
 - **Kapha stage:** Initial phase of digestion (gastric phase).
 - **Pitta stage:** Middle phase of digestion (intestinal phase).
 - **Vata stage:** Final phase of digestion (colonic phase)

Biological Clock and Its Ayurvedic Relevance

Biological rhythms, including circadian rhythms, are controlled by the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) in the hypothalamus. These rhythms are influenced by external Zeitgebers (time-givers), such as light, temperature, and food intake. Ayurveda's **Dinacharya and Ritucharya** emphasize aligning daily routines with these biological rhythms.

- Waking up at Brahma Muhurta (before sunrise) to enhance Vata function.
- Main meals during Pitta dominance (midday) to facilitate optimal digestion.
- Avoiding heavy meals at night to prevent Kapha imbalance.

Ayurvedic Correlation with Chronobiology

Ayurveda's understanding of Dosha variations aligns with the modern scientific understanding of the biological clock:

- **Circadian Rhythm:** The 24-hour cycle of physiological activities corresponds to the Tridosha variations at different times of the day.
- **Infradian Rhythm:** Seasonal Dosha cycles (Kapha in winter, Pitta in summer, and Vata in monsoon) align with the body's physiological adaptability to environmental changes.

- **Ultradian Rhythm:** The smaller cycles (such as digestion and sleep) reflect Dosha influences at shorter intervals.

DISCUSSION:

The synchronization of biological rhythms with Dosha-Awastha has significant health implications. A well-maintained circadian rhythm ensures optimal digestion, metabolism, sleep, and overall well-being. Modern lifestyle changes, such as erratic sleep patterns, night shifts, and improper diet, disrupt this natural cycle, leading to Dosha imbalances and lifestyle disorders like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. The ultradian rhythms of Tridosha have a profound evolutionary significance, playing a crucial role in regulating physiological functions within the **Shareera**. Disruptions caused by altered dietary habits and irregular sleep patterns can disturb these natural Doshic cycles, leading to the onset of diseases. Recognizing the influence of Tridoshic biological rhythms on overall health can provide valuable insights for reshaping public health strategies.

Ayurveda offers solutions to reset the biological clock: like -

- **Dinacharya (Daily Routine):** Incorporating Ayurveda's recommended daily regimen can enhance biological synchronization.
- **Rutucharya (Seasonal Regimen):** Adjusting diet and lifestyle according to seasonal variations prevents Dosha imbalances.
- **Ahara-Vihar (Diet and Lifestyle):** Consuming meals at appropriate times and engaging in mindful activities promotes Dosha harmony.

CONCLUSION:

The concept of Dosha-Awastha in Ayurveda offers a profound understanding of physiological rhythms, which align with the biological clock. By following Ayurvedic principles, one can maintain equilibrium in

Tridoshas, thereby preventing lifestyle disorders and promoting holistic health. Integrating Ayurvedic wisdom with modern chronobiology can lead to more effective therapeutic interventions and a balanced lifestyle.

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