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# An Ayurveda approach of Skin Care w.s.r. to Deha Prakriti (Body Constitution) : A Review Study

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## ABSTRACT

*Prakriti* (Body Constitution) is an important concept of *Ayurveda* which is decided at the time of birth. It shows differences in physical, physiological and psychological characteristics of an individual. Variation in skin characteristics is found as per *Prakriti*. In day-to-day lifestyle due to unwholesome and unhealthy food habits along with sedentary and stressful lifestyle result in various skin problems. *Ayurveda* has explained various skin regimens according to *Deh Prakriti* like *Hetu, Nidan Parivarjan, Ahara, Vihara, Lepa, Snehan, Utsadan, Udvartan* etc. For healthy skin. As we know in contemporary science there are various cosmetic products but does not have as productive result as we want so far, for the sake of society benefits. This article shows *Ayurvedic* approach towards skin care.

**Key words:** *Deh Prakriti, Nidan Parivarjan, Utsadan, Udvartan.*

## INTRODUCTION

Beauty is one of the essentialities of human being which gives proud and confident feeling to individual. So, all and everyone is extra conscious about it and are in search of better remedy for their crowning glory. Cosmetic field is gaining wide importance in view of upliftment of health standards and awareness. The skin problems are also increasing which cause damage to beauty due to modified lifestyle and polluted atmosphere. The overuse and misuse of cosmetic is also affecting skin health.<sup>[1]</sup> The skin covers external surface of the body and is largest organ of body. It provides protection to the body in various ways from

Microbes, abrasion, heat and chemicals.<sup>[2]</sup> In *Ayurveda*, *Twacha* word is used for skin and derived from “*Tvac*” *Dhatu*, which means to cover.<sup>[3]</sup> In *Ayurveda* concepts of personality and beauty are explained under heading of *Prakriti, Sara* (state of excellence of body constitution) and *Pramana* (optimum desirable measurement of body constituents).<sup>[4]</sup> *Prakriti* means overall nature of an individual. According to *Sushruta, Prakriti* remains inherited throughout the life.<sup>[5]</sup> *Ayurveda* identifies the best set of substrate such as *Aahara* (dietary pattern) and *Vihara* (routine behavior) to be useful to optimize the system performance in regards to *Prakriti* subtypes. It is, therefore clear that knowledge of *Prakriti* subtype may go long a long way in maintenance by making one aware of suitable and unsuitable substances applicable on one to one basis.<sup>[6]</sup> Based on predominance of individual *Dosha* at the time of conception, there are three major types of *Prakriti* named as per the predominance *Dosha*, i.e. *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*.<sup>[7]</sup> In Ancient *Ayurveda* literature, different characteristics of skin are given according to *Prakriti*. Everyone should know about his *Prakriti* and accordingly Pattern of his skin and of course which diet, lifestyle or regimens (*Lepa, Snehan, Udvartan*) is suitable for his skin. *Prakriti* should not be perverted,

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and how to keep it *Prakrit*, I am going to describe them all here!

**AIM**

To review the *Ayurvedic* approach of skin care with special reference to *Deh Prakriti* (Body Constitution).

**OBJECTIVES**

To study the skin care regimens and lifestyle which is mentioned in our *Samhitas*, Literature related to *Deh Prakriti* (Body Constitution).

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

*Ayurveda* classical texts, *Samhitas*, online data, journals and supportive text of contemporary science will be referred.

**LITERARY REVIEW**

In development of fetus, due to its own reasons *Dosha* become intensified. This non pathogenic intensified status of *Dosha* remains unchangeable from birth to death is called as *Prakriti*.<sup>[8]</sup> During conception fetus present with various proportion of *Dosha*. Due to this dominance of one or more than one *Dosha* at a time of *Garbhadharana*, is responsible for psychosomatic expressions called *Deha Prakriti*.<sup>[9]</sup> Predominance of one, two or all three *Dosha* in various proportions, affects fetus. Exhibition of such predominance is called *Dosha Prakriti* of that individual.<sup>[10]</sup>

**Formation of Prakriti**

*Prakriti* is formed at the time of sperm-ovum union in accordance to attributes of predominant *Dosha*.<sup>[11]</sup> These *Dosha* predominance is in normal state and not an aggravated. According to *Dalhana*, these predominant *Vata* etc. are of two types Normal and abnormal of which the former emerging simultaneously with the body are source of natural constitution while the latter cause abnormality in fetus. For the development of human constitution *Kashyapa* lays emphasis on *Panchabhautica* nutrient *Rasa* supplied by the mother to the fetus and the fetus is nourished by the mother, so identical type of *Prakriti* of human being is formed from embryonic life.<sup>[12]</sup>

**Types of Prakriti**

**Prakriti is initially of two types**

1. *Doshaja* (due to predominance of *Dosha*)<sup>[13]</sup>
2. *Gunaja* (due to reflection of Psychological effects).

**Ayurveda concept of beauty**

1. Proper functioning of *Kapha* which offer moisturizing balance.
2. Proper functioning of *Pitta* associated with balancing between chemical and hormonal activities of the skin.
3. Proper functioning of *Vata* relates with effective circulation of nutrients to the layers of skin

**Ayurveda perspective of Tvak (skin)**

*Ayurveda* described skin as *Tvak* which cover whole body, the different layers of skin perform various protective function and different diseases of skin may occur due to improper nourishment of such skin layers. The vitality if *Tvak* maintained by *Rakta Dhatu* and appearance of *Tvak* greatly depends upon characteristics of *Shukra* and *Shonita*. The colour, texture, thickness and glow of skin are differs person to person since body constitution differ individually. Therefore, the approaches of skin care set according to the type of *Prakriti* of an individual.<sup>[14]</sup>

**Table 1: Characteristics of skin according to Deha Prakriti<sup>[15]</sup>**

SN	Characteristics	Vata Prakriti	Pitta Prakriti	Kapha Prakriti
1.	<b>Skin type</b>	Dry and uneven toned, rough, prone to fine lines and wrinkles. Thin texture with fine pores, thin	Extremely prone to getting tanned as it is sensitive, Soft, warm moist (slight wrinkle moles, acne) and	Thick, oily cold, pale soft, glossy clear, dull, thick, has a tendency of enlarged pores and is proneness to cystic acne.

		cracked cool.	medium thickness.	
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**DISCUSSION**

**Table 2: Skin care regimens according to Deha Prakriti<sup>[16],[17]</sup>**

Regimens	Vata Prakriti	Pitta Prakriti	Kapha Prakriti
<b>Ahara (Diet)</b>	<p>Should eat foods that increase <i>Kapha (Snigdha Ahara)</i> qualities, such as heaviness, smoothness . (Balance the coldness and lightness), warm, moist food, sweet, salty and sour food.</p> <p><b>Beverages:</b> Buttermilk, warm teas, nut milk, and warm water.</p> <p><b>Grains:</b> Rice, oats, quinoa, and wheat</p> <p><b>Fruits:</b> Berries, peaches, mangoes, melons, bananas, coconuts, and cooked apples</p> <p><b>Vegetables:</b> Carrots, beets, squash,</p>	<p>Sweet, bitter, astringent and cool flavours combat the <i>Pitta</i> fire.</p> <p><b>Grains:</b> Barley, cooked oat, rice, wheat.</p> <p><b>Fruits:</b> Cooling fruits, sweet juicy fruits, melons, water melons, especially coconut, Bananas, pears, plums, pomegranates , Cherrie, grapes. Fruit should be consumed at least one hour before or after meals, and not at all in the evening.</p> <p><b>Vegetables:</b> All sweet and astringent types of vegetable, cooling vegetable, leafy green vegetables, green beans, peas, cucumber, squash,</p>	<p>Dry, light, warming, pungent and bitter flavours help combat the sluggish nature of <i>Kapha</i> type.</p> <p><b>Grains:</b> Millet, buckwheat, barley, oats, couscous.</p> <p><b>Avoid:</b> Cooked oats, white and brown rice, wheat.</p> <p><b>Fruits:</b> Apples, apricots, berries, pears, dried fruit, pomegranates, cherries.</p> <p><b>Avoid:</b> Pineapple, bananas, dates, generally very sweet and sour fruits.</p> <p><b>Vegetables:</b> Peas, carrots, garlic, cabbage, peppers, mushrooms, radishes, beetroot, onions, bean sprouts.</p> <p><b>Avoid:</b> Sweet and juicy varieties of</p>

<p>lentils, mung beans, sweet potatoes, and green, leafy vegetables</p> <p><b>Spices:</b> Ginger, basil, bay, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, parsley, and turmeric, long Pepper.</p> <p><b>Nuts and seeds:</b> Almonds, chestnuts, cashews, pistachios, and sunflower and pumpkin seeds</p> <p><b>Meat and eggs:</b> chicken, turkey, and eggs, seafood.</p>	<p>mushrooms, asparagus.</p> <p><b>Spices:</b> Coriander, cinnamon, turmeric, cardmom, fennel. As a general rule, add spices sparingly.</p> <p><b>Nuts:</b> Almonds (soaked and peeled).</p> <p><b>Seeds:</b> Halva, Pysilium, Sunflower fully ripe.</p> <p><b>Meat:</b> Eggs in moderation, other meat and fish product should be avoided.</p>	<p>vegetables, cucumber, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, squash</p> <p><b>Herbs &amp; Spices:</b> Cayenne pepper, pepper, horseradish, garlic, ginger, turmeric, cloves, cardmom, cinnamon, coriander, fenugreek, fennel.</p> <p><b>Nuts:</b> walnuts, coconut, pine nuts.</p> <p><b>Seeds:</b> Sunflower, sesame, pumpkin.</p> <p><b>Meat:</b> Chicken or turkey (the dark meat in each case), eggs (not fried), prawns, game.</p> <p><b>Milk Products:</b> Buttermilk. Soya milk, goat's milk.</p>	
<b>Apathya (Avoid)</b>	<p>Cold and raw foods as well as pungent, bitter, and astringent, dry foods. Avoid fasting, untimely intake of food, avoid less intake of food. Aerated drink, junk foods. Avoid</p>	<p>Pungent, sour, excess spices, salty or too hot,</p>	<p>Foods that are sour, salty, sweet, oily or very high in protein, oils &amp; fats (butter, coconut oil, all kinds of sugar)</p>

	stress, excessive thinking.		
<b>Vihara</b>	To Wake up in <i>Brahmi Muhurtha</i> (getting up early), meditation, <i>Yoga Nidra</i> , and restorative <i>Yoga</i> poses, avoid <i>Ratrijagaran</i> (night vigil), mild form of exercise.	It is ideal for <i>Pitta Prakriti</i> (in fact everyone) to wake up in <i>Brahmi Muhurtha</i> . Moderate amount of exercise ( <i>Vyayam</i> ) is good for <i>Pitta Prakriti</i> . <i>Yoga</i> , walking, avoid direct sunlight in afternoon.	To wake up in <i>Brahmi Muhurtha</i> (getting up early), <i>Jivha Nirlekhana</i> (tongue scraping), <i>Vyayam</i> (Exercise), avoid <i>Diwaswapa</i> (day sleeping).
<b>Abhyanga</b>	Avocado oil, coconut oil, sesame oil and extra virgin olive oil. <i>Kumkumadi Taila</i> (to enhance beauty and keep facial skin well moistened with good glow). <i>Tila Tail</i> (reduce dryness)	<i>Manjistha Taila</i> (Reduce rashes on your skin & inflammation, acne) + <i>Jeshthamadha Taila</i> (Soothing effect on skin, reduce redness, irritation, swelling) massage with coolant oil such as coconut oil.	<i>Mahanarayan Taila</i> (Good for body). <i>Dhanvantaram Taila</i> (to keep body, skin warm and active).
<b>Lepa</b>	<i>Shatadhaut a Ghrit</i> , go <i>Ghrit</i> .	Sandalwood paste (facial cream). Rose water. <i>Dashanga lepa</i> ,	<i>Kumkumadi Lepam</i> & <i>Mahatiktalepa m</i> (very useful in balancing down the excess oiliness of skin).
<b>Nasya</b>	<i>Anu Tail</i> , <i>Tila Tail</i> (to reduce drieness)	<i>Anu Tail</i> is well tolerated as it contains several coolant herbs.	Sesame oil or <i>Anu Tail</i>

	and coldness).	Go <i>Ghrit</i> (Cow ghee) used as nasal drops.	
<b>Udvartan a (powder massage)</b>	<i>Utsadana - Snigdha Udvartana</i> with oil / <i>ghrit</i> (skin moisturizer as well as reduce drieness of skin).	Cucumber face pack, Coriander (excellent natural cleanser). Sandalwood, jasmine, turmeric (to keep the skin Warm and moist, reduce heat).	<i>Kolakulathadi Churna</i> Or <i>Kottamchukkadi Churna</i> (keeps the body fat under control and also relieves excess oiliness.  Licorice & Sandalwood powder (Good for oily skin).  <i>Udgharshana - Ruksha Udvartana</i> (without oil)
<b>Nidan Parivarjan</b>	Keep away the causative factors of <i>Vata</i> vitiation.	Keep away the causative factors of <i>Pitta</i> vitiation.	Keep away the causative factors of <i>Kapha</i> vitiation.

**Other than some internal routine for glowing skin:**

- 1) Diet:** vegetarian diet, Avoid - fatty, fried, processed foods, salt, sugar seafood and red meat. This is already mentioned in Ayurvedic texts i.e., *Virudh Aahara*.
- 2) Sleep and Exerise:** Exercise promotes sweating, increase circulation and calms the mind. Sleep and increase stimulate growth hormones which promote more production of collagen and elastin to keep your skin tout.
- 3) Yoga:** It helps circulate the lymph and blood, tones the muscles cause proper *ojas*, vitality and glow.<sup>[18]</sup>

**CONCLUSION**

When it comes to skincare, the resilience and glow of a person's skin is considered a reflection of their health. The quality of skin is determined by a person's *Deha Prakriti*. In order to maintain and restore healthy skin,



the *Prakriti* need to be balanced. Hence in *Ayurveda*, it is key to choose a skin care regime that matches the kind of skin and *Deh prakriti* a person has. According to *Deh Prakriti* various regimens such as *Hetu, Nidan parivarjan, Ahara, Vihara, Apathya, Snehan, Abhyang, Nasya, Udvartan, Udsadan*, which are important in daily lifestyle and to keep skin healthy and protective has mentioned in above table 2.

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