

Doshagati and Rogamarga: An Ayurvedic Perspective on the Movement of Doṣas and Pathways of Disease with Contemporary Clinical Correlation

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ABSTRACT

The concepts of **Doṣagati** (movement and displacement of doṣas) and **Rogamārga** (pathways of disease manifestation) constitute an important foundation of Ayurvedic pathophysiology. Ayurveda explains that diseases arise when vitiated doṣas move from their normal sites to different body pathways and interact with susceptible tissues. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe three major Rogamārgas—Bāhya (external), Madhyama (intermediate), and Ābhyantara (internal)—which determine disease localization, prognosis, and therapeutic approach. Understanding the dynamics of doṣagati helps the physician identify disease progression, prognosis, and appropriate line of management including Śodhana and Śamana therapies. The present article systematically reviews classical references regarding Doṣagati and Rogamārga from the CarakaSamhita along with commentaries and interprets them in the light of contemporary biomedical understanding such as systemic inflammation, tissue localization, metastatic spread, neurovascular pathology, and gastrointestinal disease pathways. The article highlights the relevance of these concepts in modern integrative and personalized healthcare.

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda considers health as a state of equilibrium of **Doṣa, Dhātu, Agni, and Mala** along with mental and sensory well-being. Disease develops when the equilibrium of doṣas is disturbed due to improper diet, lifestyle, seasonal variations, or psychological factors. Once aggravated, the doṣas migrate from their normal locations and spread through different channels of the body, producing pathological manifestations.

This movement of aggravated doṣas is termed **Doṣagati**. The pathways through which diseases manifest are termed **Rogamārga**. These concepts are fundamental for understanding:

- Disease progression
- Localization of pathology

- Prognosis
- Selection of treatment modality
- Planning of purification therapies
- Assessment of curability

Ayurvedic classics explain that the same doṣa may produce different diseases depending upon the pathway involved, tissue susceptibility, and strength of the patient. Hence, Rogamārga and Doṣagati together provide a sophisticated clinical model resembling modern concepts of tissue tropism, disease dissemination, and systemic pathology.

Aims and Objectives

Aim

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To systematically analyze the Ayurvedic concepts of Doṣagati and Rogamārga and interpret their clinical significance with contemporary relevance.

Objectives

1. To explain the concept of Doṣagati according to Ayurvedic classics.
2. To describe the etiological factors responsible for movement of doṣas.
3. To classify and explain the three Rogamārgas.
4. To correlate Rogamārga with prognosis and treatment planning.
5. To interpret classical concepts in the context of modern clinical science.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

The study is based on:

- Classical Ayurvedic texts
- Commentaries of Chakrapāṇidatta and Gaṅgādhara
- Contemporary Ayurvedic literature
- Published interpretations of Rogamārga and Doṣagati

Methods

- Literary review of primary Ayurvedic texts
- Comparative analytical study

- Conceptual interpretation with contemporary biomedical understanding

Concept of Doṣagati

Definition

Doṣagati refers to the movement, displacement, aggravation, diminution, or redistribution of doṣas within the body.

Classical Reference

CarakaSamhitāSūtrasthāna 17/112–114

Doṣas undergo:

- Kṣaya – diminution
- Sthāna/Samatva – normalcy
- Vṛddhi/Prakopa – aggravation

They may move:

- Upward (Ūrdhva)
- Downward (Adhaḥ)
- Obliquely (Tiryak)

They may localize in:

- Koṣṭha
- Śākhā
- MarmāsthīSandhi

Types of Doṣagati

Table 1: Types of Doṣagati

Type	Meaning	Clinical Interpretation
Kṣaya	Depletion of doṣa	Functional insufficiency
Samatva	Equilibrium	Physiological balance
Vṛddhi	Aggravation	Hyperfunctional/pathological state
Ūrdhvagati	Upward movement	Vomiting, epistaxis, cough
Adhogati	Downward movement	Diarrhea, urinary disorders
Tiryakgati	Oblique/peripheral spread	Skin and systemic disorders

Seasonal Variation of Doṣas

Ayurveda explains physiological fluctuation of doṣas according to seasons.

Table 2: Seasonal Changes of Doṣas

e	Accumulation (Caya)	Aggravation (Prakopa)	Pacification (Praśama)
Vāta	Grīṣma	Varṣā	Śarada
Pitta	Varṣā	Śarada	Hemanta
Kapha	Śīśira	Vasanta	Grīṣma

Contemporary Perspective

These seasonal fluctuations resemble:

- Circadian and seasonal metabolic changes
- Climatic influence on immunity

- Environmental impact on inflammatory disorders

Movement of Doṣas

1. Movement from Koṣṭha to Śākhā

Etiological Factors

Causes	Effect
Excess exercise	Mobilization of doṣas
Excess heat	Vasodilation and tissue spread
TikṣṇaAhāra	Tissue irritation
Improper diet/lifestyle	Systemic imbalance
Vāta aggravation	Forceful movement of doṣas

Contemporary Correlation

This resembles:

- Systemic inflammatory spread
- Peripheral dissemination of toxins

- Autoimmune tissue localization

2. Movement from Śākhā to Koṣṭha

Factors Responsible

Factor	Action
Vṛddhi of doṣa	Intensifies mobilization
Srotoshodhana	Clears channels
Pācana	Metabolic digestion
Liquefaction	Mobilizes toxins
VātaNigraha	Controls abnormal movement

Clinical Relevance

This principle forms the basis of:

- Panchakarma preparation
- Śodhana therapies
- Detoxification procedures

Rogamārga

Definition

Rogamārga refers to the pathways through which diseases manifest and progress.

Three Types

1. BāhyaRogamārga
2. MadhyamaRogamārga

3. ĀbhyantaraRogamārga

1. BāhyaRogamārga (External Pathway)

Components

- Tvak
- Rakta
- Māṁsa
- Meda
- Asthi
- Majjā
- Śukra

Diseases Included

Diseases	Modern Correlation
Kuṣṭha	Dermatological disorders
Piḍakā	Acne/abscess
Visarpa	Cellulitis/herpes
Śvayathu	Edema
Vidradhi	External abscess
Vyaṅga	Hyperpigmentation

Prognosis

Generally easier to treat.

Contemporary Relevance

Comparable to:

- Superficial inflammatory diseases
- Dermatological conditions
- Peripheral tissue disorders

2. MadhyamaRogamārga

Structures Involved

- Marma
- Asthi
- Sandhi
- Snāyu
- Kaṇḍara
- Basti
- Hṛdaya
- Mūrdha

Diseases Included

Diseases	Modern Correlation
Pakṣāghāta	Stroke/hemiplegia
Ardīta	Bell's palsy
SandhiSūla	Arthritis
Rājayakṣmā	Tuberculosis
Gudabhramśa	Rectal prolapse

Prognosis

Difficult to cure (Kṛcchrasādhyā).

Contemporary Interpretation

Corresponds to:

- Neurodegenerative disorders
- Musculoskeletal diseases
- Organ-related pathologies
- Connective tissue disorders

3. ĀbhyantaraRogamārga

Structures Included

- Mahāsrotas
- Āmaśaya
- Pakvāśaya
- Gastrointestinal tract

Diseases Included

Diseases	Modern Correlation
Jvara	Fever
Atisāra	Diarrhea
Chardi	Vomiting
Kāsa	Cough
Śvāsa	Dyspnea
Gulma	Abdominal masses
Udara	Abdominal disorders

Prognosis

Variable:

- Curable
- Difficult to cure
- Manageable
- Incurable

Comparable to:

- Gastrointestinal diseases
- Systemic infections
- Metabolic disorders
- Respiratory diseases

Clinical Importance of Rogamārga

Contemporary Correlation

Table 3: Clinical Utility of Rogamārga

Clinical Aspect	Importance
Diagnosis	Identifies disease localization
Prognosis	Predicts curability
Treatment planning	Guides Śamana or Śodhana
Panchakarma	Determines route of elimination
Disease progression	helps understand spread of pathology

Contemporary Interpretation

1. Systems Biology Perspective

RogamārgaResembles:

- Tissue-specific pathology
- Organ system classification

- Disease dissemination pathways

2. Personalized Medicine

Assessment Of:

- Doṣa
- Tissue involvement

- Disease pathway
- Patient strength

Resembles Modern:

- Precision medicine

- Personalized therapeutics
- Systems-based clinical assessment

3. Immunological Correlation

Ayurvedic Concept	Modern Parallel
DoṣaPrakopa	Inflammatory dysregulation
Srotodushti	Microcirculatory dysfunction
ŚākhāGati	Peripheral tissue spread
KoṣṭhaGati	Central inflammatory localization

4. Panchakarma and Detoxification

Movement of doṣas from Śākhā to Koṣṭha before elimination resembles:

- Mobilization phase of detoxification
- Redistribution kinetics
- Metabolic clearance mechanisms

DISCUSSION

The concepts of Doṣagati and Rogamārga demonstrate the advanced pathological understanding of Ayurveda. Unlike symptom-based approaches, Ayurveda explains disease through dynamic interaction among doṣas, tissues, channels, and pathways. Disease manifestation depends not only on causative factors but also on tissue susceptibility, strength of the host, digestive status, and route of pathological spread.

The classification into Bāhya, Madhyama, and ĀbhyantaraRogamārga offers a clinically practical framework for prognosis and treatment planning. Diseases involving MadhyamaRogamārga are difficult to treat due to involvement of vital organs and deeper tissues, similar to chronic neurological and autoimmune disorders in modern medicine.

The movement of doṣas between Koṣṭha and Śākhā reflects dynamic pathological migration analogous to inflammatory dissemination, metastatic spread, and systemic immune responses. Panchakarma principles are based upon understanding this movement and mobilizing pathological factors toward elimination pathways.

Modern Medicine Increasingly Recognizes:

- Tissue specificity
- Gut-systemic axis
- Neuro-immunological interaction
- Metabolic individuality

These concepts strongly parallel AyurvedicDoṣagati and Rogamārga theory.

CONCLUSION

Doṣagati and Rogamārga are fundamental concepts of Ayurvedic pathology that explain disease localization, progression, prognosis, and therapeutic planning. The

movement of aggravated doṣas from their normal sites into various pathways forms the basis of disease manifestation. Classification of Rogamārga into Bāhya, Madhyama, and Ābhyantara provides a systematic understanding of disease severity and curability.

These concepts demonstrate the holistic and systems-based approach of Ayurveda and closely resemble contemporary ideas of personalized medicine, systemic pathology, tissue specificity, and integrative healthcare. Understanding Rogamārga and Doṣagati remains highly relevant for rational Ayurvedic diagnosis, Panchakarma planning, prognostic assessment, and individualized treatment strategies.

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