Physiological Perspectives of Ashti Dhatu and Role of Basti Chikitsa towards the Health Restoration of Ashti Dhatu

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ABSTRACT

Ashti is one of the important Dhatus amongst the many other Dhatus of body which mainly involve in Sharira dharana function, it provide shape and physical built up of body and protect internal organs from external shock. The equilibrium of Ashti dhatu helps to restore normal health status while disturbed functioning of Ashti dhatu leads pathological states. The disturbance in Ashti dhatu may be Vriddhi or Kshaya that further leads many other bone disorders. The ayurveda described various approaches to restore physiological health of Ashti dhatu and Basti chikitsa is one of them. Considering thus present article summarizes physiological aspects of Ashti dhatu and role of Basti chikitsa towards the management of pathological disturbances related to the Ashti dhatu.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Ashti dhatu, Basti chikitsa, Physiology

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Introduction

Ayurveda is considered as one of the primary health science of ancient India. The major approaches of ayurveda help to establish health and longevity. The balancing state of Doshas, Dhatu & Agni provides normal health status and keep person away from diseases. The normal functioning of Dhatus constitutes biological units of body and maintains physiological regulations of vital organs. Ayurveda described seven Dhatus and Ashti dhatu is one of them. Ayurveda mentioned that the general structure of Ashti dhatu remains unchanged during life span since it is predominate with Prithvi Mahabhoot which imparts stability. Ashti is considered as place of air: Vata dosha. When Vata increase may be decrease in quality of Ashti. Therefore maintaining Vata dosha is considered as prime approach for the management of irregularities related to Ashti dhatu. Further, Bastichikitsa is best when management of Vata dosha is intended.

Physiological role of Ashti dhatu

Dharana is the main function of Ashti dhatu that gives shape to the body and maintain structural framework.

Ashti dhatu protects organs of body from external shock.

Avalamban (maintain erect posture of body).

Nibandhan (provide strength and stability to Mamsa and Sira).

Ashti dhatu support Majja Dhatu.

Mala poshana is another function of Ashti dhatu.

Physical strength and compactness of body supported by Ashti dhatu

Ashti dhatu connects tissues and establishes coordination for various physiological activities including movement.

Abnormalities related to Ashti dhatu

Ashti Daurbalya, Ashti Saushirya, Pratatm Vata Roga, Ashti Nistoda and Timir Darshnam, etc. are some major abnormalities related to Ashti dhatu.

Ashti vriddhi lakshana

Adhyasthi means extra growth of bone which may leads other complications such as: Acromegaly in which abnormal growth of hands, feet and jaw occurred. Paget's disease is another condition related to excessive growth of bone in which bone enlargement occurs particularly to pelvis, spine.
and skull area. Melorheostosis is other similar types of condition which involves thickening of cortical bone 4-7.

- **Asthi kshaya lakshana**

Asthi kshaya means decrease in quality of Asthi dhatu which resembles condition of osteoporosis as per modern science.

![Figure 1](image)

**Figure 1**: Some manifestations related to the abnormalities in Asthi dhatu

### Causes for Abnormalities in Asthi dhatu:

- Aging
- Physical stress
- Malnutrition
- Degeneration of bone tissue in diseases condition
- Surgical trauma and injury
- Environmental effects
- **Ahara-Viahar** that vitiate Vata

### Role of Basti karma

Ayurveda mentioned various approaches to restore health status of Asthi dhatu including Basti karma which offers following beneficial effects:

- **Majja gata vikaras** can be treated effectively with the help of Kala basti and Karma Basti.
- **Basti karma** regulates function of Vata thus maintain physiology of bone.
- **Basti** pacify vitiated Doshas and enhances nutritional supply.
- **Basti** imparts direct effect on Asthi and Majja Dhatu and facilitate functions of channels that supply to bone tissues.
- **Sukshma Guna** of Basti drugs reaches up to micro circulation and enhances nutritional supply to all parts.
- **Thikshna Guna** of ingredients used for Basti karma break aggravated Mala and Dosha thereby facilitate their evacuation from body.

Snigdha Guna of Basti Dravyas liquefies vitiated Doshas and removes blockage of channels.

*Sneha of Basti* increases permeability thus balances process of exchange and diffusion thus improves nourishment of bone and other tissue.

Utkleshana or Samana effects of Basti pacify Dushya of Srothas thus acts on initial stage and perform function of Samprapti Vighatana of Asthi pradoshajvikara.

**Basti** helps to maintain integrity of peripheral nerve and prevents process of degeneration thus reduces loss of integrity of bone tissue.

**Basti** promote normal bacterial flora of body require for process of digestion and assimilation thus boost regeneration of tissues.

**Basti** enhances process of absorption, imparts neural activation and causes mechanical stimulation therefore helps in degenerative disorders.

**Basti** relieve Vata thus helps in symptoms such as; pain, stiffness and tenderness 5-10.

### Conclusion

Asthi is vital Dhatus of body provides shape and physical integrity to the body. Asthi protects organs of body from external shock, maintain posture of body, provide strength and stability, support Majja Dhatu, imparts compactness of body. Asthi dhatu connects tissues and regulates functions of movement. The abnormal state of Asthi dhatu may be considered as Vridhi or Kshaya. Ayurveda described various approaches to restore Asthi dhatus and Basti chikitsa is one such approach. Basti karma regulates normal state of Vata, pacify vitiated Doshas, enhances nutritional supply, facilitate
functions of channels supplying to bony tissues, helps in *Samprapti Vighatana* of *Asthi pradoshaj vikara*, *Basti* prevents process of degeneration and boost regeneration of tissues thus strengthen physiological functioning of *Asthi dhatu*.

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