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Importance of tridoshas (vata, pitta, kapha), trigunas (sattva, rajas, tamas) and spiritual dimension in a holistic approach to health

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In modern medicine we mostly give importance to molecules and structures and rightly so. Without right levels of glucose in our blood stream cells cannot function. Without amino acids we cannot form proteins and without calcium bones will be brittle.

How is it however that all these molecules and chemicals form, move and react with each other in our bodies?

What are the energies that join sperm and ovum, form a foetus give birth to an infant, develop a child and an adolescent, and finally produce a mature adult?

Can we imagine how many thousand molecules move from the earth to the maternal digestive system, to the placenta and then to the foetus. Then entering the foetus from the umbilical cord they travel again within the whole system entering every minute cell becoming available where ever is necessary?

This movement, subtlety and speed are qualities of the VĀTA dosha.

Within this amazing movement billion of reactions take place transforming simple molecules in more complex structures constantly

synthesizing what is useful and breaking down what is not needed in our system.

This is the function of the PITTA dosha in Ayurveda.

Finally where is the knowledge and what are the means of sustaining stability in this amazing sequence of mobility and metabolism?

How do we start our physical existence with only few micrograms of weight and we create this unbelievably steady structure able to run, climb, swim and reproduce?

How do we sustain our stability within this growth?

This is the amazing power and function of the KAPHA dosha.

During our conception the interaction of paternal and maternal doshas creates a unique genetic blueprint called prakruti. This will give the individual the basis for the physical characteristics that will govern likes and dislikes in the rest of our life.

Furthermore during our life span we constantly interact via our five senses and our mind with an ever changing environment and we respond through our organs of action in whatever way we feel appropriate.

These interactions are governed again by the tridoshas and their balance. When we remain in our prakruti state we remain healthy but when an imbalance is created (vikruti) we have the beginning of a causative factor of a disease.

Tridoshas influence the function of the brain and the nervous system and have an effect in the way our mind is working.

In the mental realm there are ideas, emotions, perceptions and complex states where energies interact with such speed creating whole scenery of our daily reality.

In modern psychology and psychiatry we tend to analyze all our ideas and emotions but there is no concept of mental energies that drive the ideas and the feelings.

Ayurveda defines in a clear way that Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the Trigunas or the 3 mental energies that drive the mind in its actions.

Sattva is a natural luminous state of mind that allows it to see the reality as it is. Rajas is a state of desire and aversion and Tamas is an energy that has inertia and ignorance.

Rajas and tamas cause psychological suffering and disturb the physiology of our body either directly through inappropriate secretion of neurotransmitters and hormones, or indirectly through inappropriate lifestyle choices e.g. wrong nutrition, lack of exercise, addictive behaviour etc.

In modern society more and more diseases are classified as psychosomatic entities and stress is linked with the major causes of mortality in today's world.

From our daily encounters and experience we know that psychological suffering is increasingly prevalent in the western society.

In Ayurveda holistic approach to health means that the physician has to guide the patients not only to balance their tridoshas but their trigunas as well targeting the real definition of health as defined in Ayurveda.

"Balanced energies, balanced state of fire,

balanced tissues and excretions, peace of soul, senses and mind this is called health"

So the above definition of health adds the spiritual dimension without which the pursuit of life would have being a meaningless race without freedom.

Ayurveda is placing importance in the physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions becoming not merely a medical system but an art of living.

