



## Relation between *Mamsa Sarata* and *Bala* (strength)-A Narrative Review

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### Abstract

*Charaka* has described evaluation of *Sara* under ten-fold examinations regarding the person to assess the *Bala* of the patient. In *Ayurveda* the term *Sara* has been described to denote the essence of *Dhatu* with an excellent quality. According to *Chakrapani* it is the purest form of *Dhatu*. Various scientist defined *Sara* in different ways to prove it as the central governing force responsible for biological strength of the body tissue. The term *Sara* has a comprehensive meaning and purpose in *Ayurveda* *Mamsa Sara* individuals can be defined as persons having the pre dominance of *Mamsa Dhatu* in respect to good quality and optimum quantity. *Sara* is the *bala* (strength). *Acharya Charak* state that *Sara* gives *purusha balamaan vishesh gyan*. That means by assessing *sara* we should know the *bala* of an individual. The characteristics features of *Dhatu sarata* are shown in *Charaka*, *Shushruta* and *Vagbhata Samhitas*. *Sara* has also been synonymously used for components providing strength, nourishment, and stability to the body such as *Oja*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Balya*, *Balavridhdikara Bhava*, *Prakrita Sleshma*. *Ayurveda* have mentioned *Sara* for the assessment of *Bala* of the person. Examination of *Mamsa Sara* gives an idea of status of *Mamsa Dhatu* in the body. So the relation between *Mamsa Dhatu*, *Mamsa Sara Purusha* and its relation with *Bala* will be explored in this study by literary means. It has also been opined that the *Bala* of a person cannot be assessed by just observing his body physique, as it has been seen that a person having a well-formed body does not always have good strength. In contrast, a person with a lean body may have excellent stability. As the *Bala* of a person serves as an important criterion for assessment of the prognosis of disease, there is a need for the development of objective parameters for its assessment and implication in clinical practices.

KEYWORDS: *Sara*, *Mamsa Sara*, *Mamsa Dhatu*, *Bala*, Strength.

### INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* is science of life. The two main aims of *Ayurveda* are, first to maintain the health of a healthy person and to completely care the illness of the person suffering from any diseases. Health is the one and only way to achieve every desired *Purushartha* i.e *Dharma*(Religion), *Artha*(wealth), *Kama*(Sexual Desire), *Moksha*(Salvation). One who desire a long healthy life such person should definitely follow the instructions given in *Ayurveda*. Whenever the body suffers from disease due to the impairment of *Dhatu* inside the body. It tries to balance the unbalanced *Dhatu* in the body. Even at the diseased condition of the patient, there is some degree of normal health restored in the body. To cure that disease, we have nothing to do; we only establish equilibrium by giving various diet, drugs and life style. Whenever the normal health supersedes the power of disease, then the state of health prevails. So, for adequate management it is essential to evaluate the exact strength (*Bala*) of the patient as well as his disease. There are various factors to be considered in assessing the strength of an individual which primarily can be considered under the ten folds of *Rogipariksa* among these nine considered for normal state of the body except *Vikrti*. *Prakrti*, *Vikrti*, *Sara*, *Samhanana Pramana*, *Satmya*, *Sattva*, *Aharasakti* or *Agni*, *Vyayamasakti*, *Vaya*. Broadly, there are nine types of *Sara* according to *Kasyapa* and eight types according to *Charak*, *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*.

*Bala* of a person cannot be assessed by just observing his body physique, as it has been seen that a person having a well-formed body does not always have good strength while a person with a lean body may have very good strength. This phenomenon has been explained by incorporating the idiom of an ant carrying a load more than her weight<sup>1</sup>. This phenomenon also happens in the case of the presentation of clinical symptoms by the patients i.e., a person with *Avara*

Sattva Bala (poor psychological strength) tends to exaggerate even the minimal complaints while a person with *Pravara Sattva Bala* (good psychological strength) is calm even on severe condition<sup>2</sup>. This can obscure the physician to determine the actual severity of a disease. This justification shows that, the assessment of *Dehabala* (physical strength) and *Manobala* (psychological strength) is of utmost significance for evaluating the severity of disease, planning treatment modalities as well as specific dietary regimens. Thus, this article has been planned to comprehend and integrate the concept of *Sara* and *Bala* in Ayurveda which will help the physician to assess the severity as well as prognosis of the diseases.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1) To critically evaluate the relation between *Mamsa Sara* and *Bala*.
- 2) To study the detailed concept of *Bala*.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

- 1) *Brihattarayee charak Samhita*, *sushruta Samhita*, *vagbhata Samhita* and their commentaries.
- 2) A complementary study on the scientific approach towards *Bala* was undertaken and relevant data were searched in different Ayurvedic literature as well as research articles that were published in scholarly journals indexed in scientific electronic database viz. PubMed, Google scholar, Science Direct, etc.
- 3) Methodology adopted for this work is collection, exploration and interpretation of subject matter from different resources.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*Mamsa sara purush lakshana* a person who has well built muscle looks very strong. He will have well defined muscles on chest, abdomen, arms, calf and thighs. The muscles are very well defined on temporal, neck, jaws, shoulders and cheeks. As such persons has qualities of *Mamsa dhatu sara*, they are also capable for good immune status even after exposure to environment by sport activities. So, as all *Dhatu*s support and provide nourishment to body instead *Mamsa dhatu* carries a very special importance. *Mamsa Dhatu* attains a very special importance due to its role in providing immunity as all the strength, stamina, bala depend on *Mamsa Dhatu*<sup>3</sup>. The concept of *Bala* in *Ayurveda* physiology is a multidimensional factor that might be referring to physical and psychological strength, ability to produce antibody in response to antigen exposure and resist the manifestation of disease as well. *Bala* of a person is determined by complex interaction of multifactor such as *Dhatu Sarata*, *Prakriti*, indulgence in dietary and behavioural activities, inherent qualities etc. Recent research has shown an association of immunity with the place of birth, time of birth, seasons, dietary factors, psychological factors, etc. These studies have been done considering the individual factor, and the multifactorial effects on the development of immunity can be done in future. The assessment of *Bala* has clinical significance as it plays an important role in determining *Rogibala*, the prognosis of the disease and administration of type and dose of drugs, choosing the proper treatment method also. Thus, objective parameters can be evaluated for the assessment of *Bala*, for understanding the disease pathophysiology as well as the treatment approach.

The concept of *Sara*: In context of *Dashvidh Pariksha* to know the *Rogi Bala* (strength of Patient.) different *Sara* (essence) has been described among which *Mamsa Sara* is also very important *Sara* to analyse the compactness of body. Although body of every individual is composed of seven *Dhatu*s (body tissues), but it is found that persons differ very much from each other at the level of *Dhatu*s, because all the seven *Dhatu*s of the body go through the certain changes during – *Jatharagni Paka* (metabolism) by which the *Sarabhaga* (nutrients) and *Kittabhaga* (waste product) are produced. The *Kittabhaga* is excreted through the excretory system and the *Sarabhaga* remains in the body for its utilization and performs different functions including body building. The ratio of this *Agni Paka* and its products are not same in every person, thus the body which is composed of seven *Dhatu*s in different quorem, differs from one another at the level of *Dhatu Sara*. Hence, individuals on the basis of *Sara*, have been classified into various categories depending upon the predominance of particular *Dhatu* in the body, except the *Sattva Sara* which is based on the preponderance of *Sattva* (psychic factor) in the body. General consideration with elucidation of *Mamsa Sara Purusha* (individual) The term *Mamsa Sara* is constituted by two components i.e. *Mamsa* and *Sara*. *Sara* literally means *Visuddhataro Dhatu* or essence of *Dhatu*s (tissues), which signifies the good quality of *Dhatu* (in respect of structure, function and property), with its presence in good quantity. *Mamsa* is the third *Dhatu* (tissue) in the sequence of seven *Dhatu*s in the body. Hence, *Mamsa Sara* persons possess good quality and quantity of *Mamsa Dhatu* in predominance. So far as the concept of classification of individuals on the basis of *Dhatu Sara* is concerned, the qualities as well as quantity of the *Dhatu* are the most essential factors, which are very much interdependent. A *Dhatu Sara* concept will probably never be completed if one of them is taken in account. Therefore in *Mamsa Sara* individuals not only the quality of muscle will be predominant but the presence of normal quantity will also be needed.

The physical and psychological characteristics of different *Sara*, described in various texts are the reflections of status of *Dhatu Sara* in the form of structure and functions. Thus the *Sara* concept provides an idea about the condition of *Dhatu* in the body. Hence examination of *Mamsa Sara* gives an idea of status of *Mamsa Dhatu* in the body. In this respect, it is also evident that the texts of *Ayurveda* have mentioned *Sara* for the assessment of *Bala*. *Bala* means strength of the body or power of resistance against the disease, which can be correlated with immunity, thus it can be assessed by assessing the *Sara* of that person. So keeping the above view in mind, one can assess the part of immunity shared by *Mamsa Dhatu* through examining the *Mamsa Sara*. As *Sara* is predominant essence of particular *Dhatu*, the number of *Dhatu Sara* present in the body of individual will be directly proportionate to the power of resistance of that individual. That is why *Sarva Sara* individuals have relatively higher strength in comparison to *Madhya or Avara sara* individuals. "In nutshell, it can be said that greater the *Dhatu Sara*, greater the power of resistance". This view also indicates that persons possessing all the *Saras* but predominated in one will be subjected to possess the resistance against the disease which may arise due to its decrease. It is evident from the *Kasyapa's* thought that the persons of particular *Sara* resist more against the diseases of that particular *Dhatu*. According to him the *Twak Sara* children have disease free *Twak* (skin) and their skin is capable of rapid healing of wound. Characteristics of *Mamsa Sara Purusha*. These persons are identified through the characteristic features present in them. These features are elucidated in different *Ayurvedic Samhitas*. The characteristics are depicted in *Charaka* and *Sushruta*. But in *Kasyap Samhita* the characteristic features are not available now a-days. *Mamsa Sara* individuals and related disease As far as second aspect of *Sara* i.e., *Bala* is concerned, according to *Gangadhara's* view they (*Mamsa Sara* persons) are having *Balam Dirgham* or having good strength and more resistance against diseases. So these persons are less liable to the *Mamsaja vyadhies*, than the persons of other *sara*. If by chance they suffer from *Mamsaja vyadhies* (muscle disorders) are cured easily. Different Characteristics of *Mamsa Sara Purusha* as described in various *Samhitas*: Physical characteristics *Sankha* (Temporal region) *Lalata* (Fore head) *Krkatika* (Nape) *Aksi/Netra* (Eye) *Ganda* (cheeks) *Hanu* (Jaws) *Griva* (Neck) *Skanddha* (Shoulder) *Udara* (Abdomen) *Kaksa* (Axillae) *Vaksha* (Chest) *Sandhi* (Joints) *Pani Pada* (Lower limb) *Sharira* (Body) *Asthi* (Bones) *Rupa* (Complexion) *Guru evam mamsopachita* (Heavy and fleshy). Physio-Psychological characteristics *Khsama* (forgiveness) *Dhriti* (Patience) *Alaulya* (Non-greediness) *Vitta* (Wealth) *Vidya* (Knowledge) *Shukha* (Happiness) *Arjava* (Simplicity) *Arogya* (Healthy) *Bala* (Strength) *Dirghayu* (Longevity) *Vidvan* (Wise) *Dhani* (Wealthy).<sup>4</sup>

## DISCUSSION

*Dhatu* (elementary) tissues) because it *Dharana* (support) the body and *Posana* (nourish) to other *Dhatu*s. *Mamsa Dhatu* is considered as third *Dhatu* in the sequence of seven *Dhatu*s. It supports the body by covering the bones and nourishes the next *Dhatu* i.e., *Medas*, hence is included under the heading of *Dhatu*s. *Mamsa Dhatu* is one of the important of all seven *Dhatu*s in body. Functions of *Mamsa Dhatu* *Lepan* (binding). Being a *Dhatu*, *Mamsa Dhatu* carries a main function of support and nourishment to body organs and ultimately body as well. Also it provides nourishment to next fourth *Dhatu* i.e. *Meda Dhatu*. Production of *kha - mala* (waste products) is also one of the functions of *Mamsa Dhatu*. Formation of *Mamsa Dhatu* When blood is metabolised by its own *Agni* and that solidified by the *Vayu*, then *Mamsa Dhatu* is formed. The *Sara* (essence) of food, known as *Ahara Rasa* gets absorbed in the *Pakvasaya* (the small and large intestines) and undergoes further transformation and becomes *Rasa Dhatu* - the first *Dhatu*. It contains nutritive materials (*Posaka amsa*) required by all the other *Dhatu*s. It travels to all the tissues through the own internal *srotas* present in the *Dhatu*s and supplies them, their nutrition. These nutritive materials are acted upon by the *Dhatvagni*, present in each *Dhatu*. After this two kinds of materials get formed i.e. *Sara* (essence) and *Kitta* (waste). The *Sara* is again of two kinds i.e (1) *Sthula* (gross) which is more in quantity, is made use of by the same *Dhatu* for its own growth. (2) *Suksma* (fine) which is less in quantity, is the moiety required for the formation of the next succeeding *Dhatu*. Thus *Rasa Dhatu* contributes some materials to *Mamsa* and so on. Hence it is said that one *Dhatu* is the food for the other. Due to its constant circulating characteristics, it is denoted as *Rasa Dhatu* which carries these materials also from one *Dhatu* to the other. Hence the preceding *Dhatu* gives the birth to its succeeding *Dhatu*. *Bala* and *Dhatu*: The qualitative and quantitative status of different *Dhatu* play a significant role in the determination of *Bala*. *Rasa-Rakta Dhatu* provides the tissue with a ceaseless supply of oxygenated blood and nutrients, *Mamsa* and *Meda Dhatu* provides muscular strength, *Asthi Dhatu* provides appropriate posture while *Majja Dhatu* increases the bony strength by filling the bony cavity, and further the *Shukra Dhatu* also increases the strength. Concept of *Sara* is very important from health and disease point of view. In *Vimana Sthana Chakrapani* comments on term *Sara* as the *Vishuddhatara Dhatu* and is use to asses *Bala Pramana* of an individual at the state of health and disease too. *Sara* is said to be the purest form of *Dhatu*, which is expressed as physical and psychological characteristics in the individuals. It is remarkable that Acharya made use of this to asses *Bala* and *Ayu* of patient. The concept of *Bala* in *Ayurveda* physiology is a multidimensional factor that might be referring to physical and psychological strength, ability to produce antibody in response to antigen exposure and resist the manifestation of disease as well. *Bala* of a person is determined by complex interaction of multifactor such as *Dhatu Sarata*, *Prakriti*, indulgence in dietary and behavioural activities, inherent qualities etc.



Recent research has shown an association of immunity with the place of birth, time of birth, seasons, dietary factors, psychological factors, etc. These studies have been done considering the individual factor, and the multifactorial effects on the development of immunity can be done in future. The assessment of *Bala* has clinical significance as it plays an important role in determining *Rogibala*, the prognosis of the disease and administration of type and dose of drugs, choosing the proper treatment method also. Thus, objective parameters can be evaluated for the assessment of *Bala*, for understanding the disease pathophysiology as well as the treatment approach. The word '*Bala*' has been invariably used for psychological strength as well as physical strength in a different context to denote its importance. It has been mentioned that the ability to perform all kinds of activities is *Bala*. It is the representative of *Utasaha* (activeness) and *Upachaya* (growth) in the body. *Acharya Charak* has considered *Prakrit Kapha* equivalent to *Bala* and *Oja* while vitiated *Kapha* to *Mala* and the root cause of diseases<sup>5</sup>. *Acharya Sushruta* has also considered that *Oja* and *Bala* are similar entities<sup>6</sup>. It might be due to the fact that *Oja* and *Kapha* possess identical attributes, so an increase in one will lead to an increase in another component and vice versa. *Kapha Dosha* is responsible for the nourishment and growth of the body, steadiness, and union of different parts, which are determinants of *Bala*. But *Dalhana* has opined in different way and stated that although *Bala* and *Oja* are not the same in all aspects. *Oja* is *Dravya* having *Rasa* (taste), *Guna* (attributes), *Vipaka* (post digestive effect), *Varna* (colour), etc., which causes nourishment, growth, and development of the body and is *Praktyaksha* (perceived by sensory organs). But this is not true in respect of *Bala* i.e., it does not possess *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Vipaka* and *Varna*, and is assessed by *Anumana* (logical thinking) through activities such as *Bharvahana Shakti* (weight bearing capacity). Classification of *Bala* The *Bala* has been classified into different categories through different approaches such as time of their onset, strength etc. There are two components of *Bala* i.e. *Dehabala* (physical strength) and *Manobala* (psychological strength). The *Manobala* can be categorized into three types according to the dominance of mental attributes i.e., *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama* which are of good, medium, and poor psychological strength respectively. Similar to this the *Dehabala* can also be categorized into *Pravara* (excellent), *Madhyama* (moderate), and *Avara Bala* (least)<sup>7</sup>. The subjects with *Pravara Bala* are capable of performing all types of physical work as well as can undergo mental stress without being affected. While the subjects with *Avara Bala* possess the contrary behaviour i.e. they get fatigued or exhausted even with the slightest exertion and becomes very anxious on even the slightest mental stress. The qualities of the person possessing *Madhyama Bala* lie in between i.e. they can withstand easily on exposure to mild and moderate stress but can not withstand excess exhaustion. *Acharya Charak* and *Vagbhata* have mentioned three categories of *Bala* i.e. *Sahaja*, *Kalaja* and *Yuktikrita*<sup>8/9</sup>. Accustomed to wholesome diet causes proper growth of the body. If a person is accustomed with the dietary habits such as intake of milk, ghee, food articles enriched in dietary fibres and micronutrients, fruit and vegetables, following seasonal regimens, not suppresses the natural urges, follows good behaviour practices etc., will be having good stamina as compared to those who are habituated with faulty dietary habits and life style. *Sattvasampacha* (good mental strength) Person with good mental attributes have good strength, for example *Sattva Sara* and *Sattvika* individuals possess more *Bala*. The psychological attributes such as stress, fear, grief, anger etc. undoubtedly affect the immunity of a person. It has been shown that the short-term response gives an immunoprotective response by preparing the person for flight and fight response, but chronic stress leads to immunosuppression. Thus, an individual, which has a tendency for overthinking and stress, has a proneness for immunosuppression and affliction with chronic disorders in long term. Each individual possesses a different ability to resist the manifestation of diseases as well as possess a good immune response to the manifestation of disease. This ability is known as *Vyadhikshmatava* which varies from person to person i.e., some individuals possess good while some possess very poor strength to resist the appearance of disease. These individual variations occur in accordance with age, dietary habits, sleep, *Agni*, *Prakriti* and *Dhatu Sarata*, functional status of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*. *Dhatu Sarata* The concept of *Dhatu Sarata* has been discussed to determine the *Bala* of an individual. The individuals having *Sarva Sara* are considered to have higher resistance in comparison to *Madhyama Sara* or *Avarasara* individuals.<sup>10</sup> *Sara Pariksha - Charaka* has emphasized that sometimes the physician may take a wrong decision only by looking at the body of the patient such as patient is strong, because of being corpulent, he is weak because of leanness. It is fallacious to consider an individual to be strong or weak either from his plumply or emaciated body or from the large or small size of his body. Some people having a Small Sized and emaciated body are seen to be strong. They are like ants that have a Small body and looked emaciated but can carry heavy particles. In another example, Like elephant having big and corpulent body possess less strength than lean and Short bodied Lion (*Vagbhata*). Thus one should examine the patient, with reference to the excellence of his *Sara*. So it is quite clear that the inherent power of a person cannot be assessed by bulk of the body, which is only judged by the *Sara* examination.

## CONCLUSION

In *Ayurveda* the term *Sara* has been described to denote the essence of *Dhatu* with an excellent quality. *Sara* is the purest form of *Dhatu*. It as the central governing force responsible for biological strength of the body. *Mamsa Sara* individuals can be defined as persons having the pre dominance of essence of *Mamsa Dhatu* According to this concept we can say that if a person has any issue related to *Mamsa Dhatu* (muscles tissue) can cure easily. The person with *Mamsa dhatu sara* can curl his or her career in exercise, physical or sports activities or any similar kind of profession.

As such persons has qualities of *Mamsa dhatu sara*, they are also capable for good immune status even after exposure to environment by sport activities. *Mamsa dhatu* attains a importance due to its role in providing immunity as all the strength, stamina, bala depend on *Mamsa dhatu*. So *Mamsa sara* person having good essence of *Mamsa Dhatu* and *Mamsa Dhatu* provide stamina, strength and *Bala* in the body. *Bala* in ayurved is physical and psychological strength, ability to produce antibody in response to antigen exposure and resist the manifestation of disease as well. *Bala* of a person is determined by complex interaction such as *Dhatu Sarata*, *Prakriti*, indulgence in dietary and behavioural activities, inherent qualities etc. The assessment of *Bala* has clinical significance as it plays an important role in determining *Rogibala*, the prognosis of the disease and administration of type and dose of drugs, choosing the proper treatment method also. Thus, objective parameters can be evaluated for the assessment of *Bala*, for understanding the disease pathophysiology as well as the treatment approach. *Mamsa sarata* individual has well defined muscles on chest, abdomen, arms, calf and thighs. The muscles are very well defined on tempolar, neck, jaws, shoulders and cheeks. The person will be having self control, good health and longetivity, strength(*bala*). Finally it is concluded that, *Mamsa Sarata* person has more strength(*bala*).

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